THE NINETEENTH CENTURY SERIES

PROGRESS OF BRITISH EMPIRE IN THE CENTURY

BY

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PREFACE.

I confess that when I undertook to write a book on the subject covered by the legend on the title-page of this volume, I had only a small and imperfect idea of the magnitude of the task before me. Its difficulties have been considerably increased by the fact that the subdivisions into which it more naturally and easily fell, were, in almost every case, covered by the titles of other volumes of this series. Possibly this is an idle complaint, since I freely admit that every chapter of this volume, as it has developed in my hands, needed the whole space at my disposal for its adequate treatment.

This being so, and the subject, the subjects I should say, being so vast and complex, I am conscious that what I have written will be more valuable, if valuable at all, as a stimulus to thought than as a definitive pronouncement. I may say at once, ardent imperialist though I be, and one who has dedicated a very large portion of his time and energies to the furtherance of the imperial idea, I am no Jingo. Neither shall I be regarded by those who read these pages as an optimist. The

progress of the British Empire has made for the good of humanity, taking a broad view of that progress, but it has to be remembered that there is a reverse side to the shield, and in the chapters to follow, I have not hesitated to turn that side toward the light. Upon that I will say no more here; but what I will say is, that apart from the mere accident of date, which under our decimal system of measuring time in decades and centuries has an artificial significance, no time could have been more appropriate than the present to sum up the progress of the British Empire; since it must be manifest to the most casual observer, that Great and Greater Britain have arrived at a supreme moment of their national existence. At the time of writing, the issue as between Boer and Briton in South Africa is undecided, though there can be no question as to the manner of its decision. But it is not to that conflict, serious though it be, that I make reference, when I talk of a supreme moment in our national life, although it is out of that conflict the dangers and trials of the future will, in all likelihood, grow. England is about to take the business of colonising Africa seriously in hand. Europe is perfectly well aware of our intention; and Europe uniformly resents it; because the ever-growing power and solidarity of the British Empire is an affront to the peoples of the Continent, especially to those peoples which cherish aspirations after colonial dominion.

It is because of this openly-expressed hostility that, as it seems to me, we are at the parting of the ways; and in estimating the chances of the future, we must keep well in our minds the undoubted enmity which the whole of Europe entertains towards us. Our safety lies in the impossibility, as we may presume, of any three nations of Europe being sufficiently preoccupied with their hatred to England, to forget their hatred to each other. In the last century, and in the early part of this, France was our only serious rival in the field of imperial influence. Then, as Sir Robert Giffen has recently pointed out, France was the foremost State of Europe, with a population of twenty-six million people, while Great Britain, irrespective of Ireland, had only eleven million inhabitants. The people of Ireland, instead of being a help, were then a drag on the country as a whole. To-day the population of the British Isles is about equal to that of France, while outside of these isles there are ten, or perhaps twelve million Britons, ready to uphold the honour of our flag, and the interests of our race wherever the one or the other be assailed. Some little time since this statement might have been challenged as belonging to the realm of speculative rhetoric; but the help given by Australia and Canada in the Soudan campaign was almost sufficient to warrant the boast; while the magnificent and practical aid accorded by all the colonies, great and small, in the suppression of the Transvaal re-

bellion, not only gives token to the stranger, of the actual unity of the Empire, and the determination of each of its component parts to uphold it as a whole wherever a province may be threatened or endangered, but is an earnest to the world that should the British Empire be menaced by any foreign power or combination of powers, the manhood of Greater Britain would come in its battalions to fight under, and for the flag which protected the colonies in their growing years, and which still protects them.

This great, this new fact, must be taken into consideration when we are counting the risks from continental schemes for our destruction. So far as France alone is concerned, they would render French rivalry a matter of small moment; even had not France shown by every act and every development of her recent history, culminating in the pitiable *exposé* at Rennes, that her upper and middle classes are paying the penalty of a long course of emasculating extravagances, and are the victims of hysteria and degeneracy. In fact the French are *décadents;* as a ruling race they no longer exist.

But in the place of France we have now in Germany and Russia two formidable, far more formidable rivals and possible enemies. Germany and Russia are both progressive nations; advancing in population, and so far, at all events, as Germany is concerned in the quality, man for man, of her people; whereas France is not only declining relatively, but actually in population; she is, and this is even more

serious for her, declining in the quality of her people. The Germans are a more fecund race than the British. From being a chance collection of small states always at variance between themselves, and with a population of 20,000,000 at the beginning of the century, Germany has become a mighty and united Empire of some 60 millions, nearly one-third of which population has had its origin in the natural increase of births over deaths during the last quarter of a century.

For the British Empire it is an awkward circumstance that Germany has developed colonial and extra-imperial aspirations, which although they have not so far enabled her to form successful colonies, will, should the present temper of the nation continue unchanged, ultimately be realised in greater or less degree; since in patience, perseverance and in the willingness and capacity to make any sacrifice in order to achieve an end, the Teuton to-day resembles the Briton of less prosperous times, before success had lowered his stamina and lessened his staying-power. The enormous sacrifices the Germans are about to make in creating a first-class navy, show that they do not mean to be handicapped in the assertion of what they may conceive to be their national destiny, because one arm of their service is weak. Still Germany and England have always been allies; and seeing that Germans and Britons have much in common, that they intermarry with such happy results, an Anglo-German alliance

is perhaps more probable than an Anglo-German rupture.

The growing power of Russia should tend in the long run to bring about such an alliance. Despite the platitudes of those rose-coloured politicians and suborned propagandists who preach of a possible *entente* between Russia and Britain, the manifest intention of Muscovite policy remains what it was when it was first formulated by Peter the Great; and that purpose and intention include the destruction, or in any case subjection, of the Anglo-Saxon race. All thinkers who do not think in grooves in Great Britain and her colonies, are gradually coming to see that this is Russia's absolute and undeviating purpose. Now Germany should know, and unquestionably does know, that since Russia's aim is to found a World-Empire which shall embrace in the end the whole earth, and to hold it by force, the elimination of the British Empire would be quickly followed by the absorption of the German Empire. France knows in her heart of hearts that she is going the way of the other Latin races; she knows nothing can save her. She joins herself to the Russian Empire in the hope that she will be able to wreak her vengeance on the country she now hates with more concentrated passion than she hates Germany. But why should the German Empire play into the hands of Russia? seeing that in the event of Britain being conquered, and France avenged, there would be nothing to save her from being herself crushed in turn.

I must not, however, travel further into the domain of the future. It seemed to me necessary to say so much, because great as is the progress our Empire has achieved during the century, it is clear, or should be clear, to all but those who are wilfully blind, that we have not gained this commanding position without adding greatly to our vulnerability; and that in order to keep what we have now, we shall have to reckon with at least one determined and unsleeping foe. What is now happening in Asia, shows us where the immediate danger lies. There can be no doubt that Russian diplomacy, in other words, Russian mendacity, has proved too much for us in that continent. It would even appear that the bulwark we hoped we had erected against Russian advance in the Yang-tse-Kiang is scarcely set up to prove itself a bulwark of sand. Now the obvious purpose of Russia is to absorb China down to the very frontiers of India. In brief, Russia aspires,—and the purpose is not even concealed—to dominate the whole of Asia; to dominate it by the agency of fire and sword. And yet this is the Power which at the end of the century has had the cynical effrontery to impose upon the credulity of the nations of Europe by inviting them to a Peace Congress, a transparent device for gaining time in the prosecution of her aggressive designs. This effort to throw dust in the eyes of the nations ought not to have imposed on the most simple; but it so far captivated sentimentalists, as to be taken seriously by a con-

siderable section of the very nation it was chiefly designed to gull—the British.

As touching arbitration as a means whereby international disputes may be settled, obviously the principle is a good one, and it would be satisfactory to record its progress during the latter part of the century, were it not for the unhappy fact that Great Britain, in her zeal to uphold the principle, has been made to suffer most severely under its practical operation. It is true the record is broken by the Venezuela award, which was in some measure favourable to Great Britain. Still the British Empire has no reason to be in love with this method of settling disputes; since the feeling of foreign countries toward us is too unanimously hostile to permit of impartiality, when they are put in the position of our judges or assessors, being humanly possible. At this very moment, the Empire is engaged in a sanguinary war, which could not have come about, had we not submitted our undoubted rights at Delagoa Bay to the arbitrament of a Frenchman—Marshal MacMahon. That however is another story, and must be told elsewhere.

It is a story, nevertheless, which affects the whole course of our recent history as an Empire, and one which indirectly has been the means of consolidating the Empire. For out of the blackness of this unhappy conflict in South Africa, the clear light of imperial patriotism has sprung. The Empire has yet to be federated politically, but the federation

of hearts within its entire area, always excepting the misguided Dutch of South Africa, is already accomplished.

It has come home to the people of the British Isles, and to the peoples in three continents sprung from these isles, that unity of action and purpose is absolutely necessary in the interests of the component parts of the Empire, and those of the Empire as a whole. The vitalising influence of the imperial idea has permeated the system of the whole Empire. We see clearly at home, and it is seen clearly in every limb of the Empire abroad, that if we are to maintain the influence, prestige and power we at present enjoy, to say nothing of increasing them, we must hold firmly together. And I venture to think that the British race is coming to understand that the responsibilities which have devolved upon it, are not merely selfish responsibilities, by which I mean responsibilities to the future of the British race alone; but that apart from egoism, and an undue and natural preference for our own work in the world, that that work as a whole, is a work on behalf of that higher humanity which with all our faults, vices and limitations we are, as a people, endeavouring to evolve. It is possible for our enemies and critics to point to our falling away from this lofty ideal, to stigmatise our extra-insular development as animated by selfish and sordid, rather than by humanitarian motives; and assuredly there is much of hypocrisy and guile about many of the pioneers of progress.

A brief experience of City life, as seen from the inside of certain organisations presumed to exist for the spread of imperialistic and national objects, objects having for their main purpose the good of the British race, will suffice to show the single-minded enthusiast that much that is purely selfish is mixed up with the actual machinery of many of these great movements and agencies of national expansion. Still, to acknowledge this, is but to acknowledge the imperfections of human nature. If such a person could be found, a cosmopolitan entirely free from the bias of race, a man born in a desert island of mixed ancestry, and indebted for his education to professors of various nationalities, who keeping their pupil constantly on the move, should take care that he did not stay long enough in any one country to become biassed in its favour, —if, I say, such a person could be found, is it vanity to assume that he would support the conviction which the patriotic Englishman cherishes deep down in his nature, that the interests of the human family collectively, are bound up in the interests of the British Empire; that in point of fact it would be an incalculable loss to humanity as a whole, if that Empire were to be robbed of her commanding position?

It has taken the British race some twelve centuries since the first real advance on savagery began, to bring the State to its present eminence. As an agent making for the advance of civilisation,

an agent working for the gradual elimination of discord and war and for the foundation of a system of universal freedom and justice leading up to that perfectibility of which poets dream, a federation of mankind speaking a common language and governed by a common law, the British Empire could scarcely be supplanted by any other aggregation of kindred peoples. Thus the extinction of the Empire would mean a distinct, and so far as one can see, an irreparable, check to the progress of the world. If it should be argued that in course of time, another power would appear, able to carry on the work the British Empire has done and is doing, it is still impossible to ignore the loss and delay involved in the transfer of this high mission into other hands. Moreover what other hands?

Is the sum total of Anglo-Saxon achievement, in literature, art, science, in the art of government and administration to be wiped off the slate of history by the imitative Slav or the calculating Teuton? or since we are told that numbers must tell, are we to be obliterated by the Mongolian? or as the late Mr. Pearson feared, by the sable races of the earth—the descendants of Ham? What is to be, is to be; but to be forewarned is to be forearmed; and surely since these dangers are so clearly foreseen, it behoves us as a race to gird up our loins and prepare to do battle with them; to meet them indeed before they overtake us. It is because, as it seems to me, there is no patriotism in burying our heads

in the sand, refusing to see the dangers and troubles which threaten us from without and from within, that in writing this volume, I have refused to be blinded, or to attempt to blind others, by the spectacle, the imposing spectacle of progress and achievement, the history of this Empire presents to the world; especially imposing as regards the last three quarters of the expiring century. Again, grèat as that progress has been, how infinitely greater it might have been, if the English people instead of wasting their energies in futile and meaningless party strife, warring to the death for mere shibboleths,—and if the intellectual classes instead of frittering away their strength in mental exercises leading nowhere—in mere persiflage—had concentrated themselves upon upholding and developing the Empire which fell to them as an asset in return for the enormous sacrifices they made during the twenty years' war with France. Immediately after the battle of Waterloo, such a course was impossible perhaps, as the people were too listless for great and novel enterprises to have any chance of success; but already in 1820 there was ample room and opportunity for the extension of the colonial policy which resulted in the founding of the Eastern Province of Cape Colony.

It is not easy to forgive the men who controlled the destinies of this Empire from that time toward the middle of the century, when the administration of the colonies, was elevated into a separate depart-

ment of State, for their blindness to the real and abiding interests of this country in regard to colonial development. Palmerston, Granville, Derby, and above all Gladstone, were men poorly endowed with imperial instincts; and they experienced much the same difficulties in controlling the development of a great colonial Empire, as a small provincial trader would have in conducting a large commercial enterprise. Especially is it to be accounted to them for unrighteousness, that they failed to read the signs of the times in Africa. Twenty-five, or at the most thirty years ago, we might have protected ourselves against all risk of being disturbed by rivals in the business of Anglicising that continent. The shortsightedness of our rulers has immensely added to our difficulties; witness the obstacle to the Cape to Cairo Railway, which only a man of Mr. Cecil Rhodes's commanding personality and persuasive eloquence could have removed. This may be given as a sample of innumerable difficulties, all of which were quite avoidable had the Foreign and Colonial Offices listened in the seventies and eighties to the counsel and entreaties of experts. Their opacity and indifference have resulted in Africa repeating the arbitrary subdivisions of territory which have proved a fruitful source of dissensions and warfare in Europe; and have left a legacy of discord between the nations of Europe concerned in Africa, which must bear evil fruit in the future. Again, the mistakes which have culminated in the present lamenta-

ble, though inevitable, war in South Africa, are as old as the Queen's reign, beginning with the Great Trek, going on to the Sand River Convention, and the retrocession of the Transvaal, and ending with the mischievous Conventions of 1881 and 1884. The lack of imagination of the Ministers responsible for these successive mistakes, is the less excusable when we remember that the United States already afforded an object lesson, teaching what might be expected to grow out of small beginnings, when the Anglo-Saxon peoples once got a firm hold on an undeveloped continent.

But I must stay my pen. I have said enough, I think, to indicate the spirit in which I have approached my task, and it now remains only to make acknowledgment of certain sources of information to which I am indebted for statistics, facts and other details necessary to enforce the positions I have taken up. In addition to Blue Books, Consular reports, and the usual books of reference, I have consulted the Journals of the Imperial Federation League, and the Proceedings published annually of the Royal Colonial Institute, together with numerous books and pamphlets prepared by such authorities as Sir Frederick Young, Sir John Colomb, Lord Meath, the late Mr. F. P. de Labillière, and countless specialists besides—writers on imperial unity, trade and defence. To these I may add the volumes on the Victorian era edited by Mr. Humphry Ward; Mr. Justin McCarthy's *History of our Times;* Mr.

Charles Booth's *Condition of the Aged Poor;* Professor Seeley's *Expansion of England;* Mr Parkin's *Imperial Federation;* Mr. Rider Haggard's *A Farmer's Year Book;* the late Mr. J. Anthony Froude's *Oceana;* Sir Charles Dilke's *Greater Britain;* Dickinson's *Developments of Parliament;* Freeman's *Greater Greece and Greater Britain;* Acworth's *Railways;* Mulhall's *Dictionary of Statistics;* Haydn's *Dictionary of Dates;* Mackenzie's *The Nineteenth Century;* Sir Rawson Rawson's *Tariff and Trade of the British Empire;* and perhaps a hundred volumes besides. In any case it would be tedious to mention all the books to which I have referred, in greater or less degree, in the preparation of this volume, though I may say that I have gone to these books for facts, and make none of their authors responsible for the deductions or opinions which I have drawn from them, or formed in connection with them.

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This volume was written early in 1900. This will account for references in the present tense to events which have now become history, particularly to the events in the last months of the reign of the late revered Queen.—Editors.

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PROGRESS OF BRITISH EMPIRE IN THE CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

IMPULSE TO IMPERIAL PROGRESS.

THE last years of the eighteenth century and the first years of the nineteenth were so crowded with events pregnant with the germs of the century's development, that it may be said, without hyperbole, that the British Empire, as an Empire, was in its birth throes during that intensely vital period of our national history. The loss of America, grievous blow as it was to the *amour propre* of the nation, not only made Englishmen long for new worlds to conquer, but rendered them peculiarly sensitive to insult and nervously ready to resent it. It was no doubt largely this sensitiveness which animated and sustained the nation in that determined duel with France, which succeeded quickly on the cessation of the fruitless struggle with the United States. Englishmen did not forget that it was the co-operation of France which enabled her colonies to defy suc-

cessfully her authority; and when the excesses of the Revolutionary factions in that country culminated in the massacre of Louis XVI., the people of England, who for a while had viewed favourably the efforts of the French people to free themselves from the tyrannical rule of despotic monarchs and scarcely less despotic priests and nobles, were alienated entirely, not only from France, but from the cause of liberty itself. The caricature of freedom which the French had set up on the other side of the Channel fairly frightened them. The attempts of the French Republic to induce Englishmen to make common cause with France against their own Government served still further to disgust the great majority among the ruling classes in this country with the cause of liberty. So we joined the nations of Europe in a nine years' war, which really had for its object the elimination of the French nation as a free people, and thus placing it once again under the heel of king, noble and prelate; while the tentative proposals for Parliamentary Reform brought before the House in 1793 were rejected by enormous majorities.

During the next few years men who had the courage to express, orally or in print, liberal opinions, though put forth for the most part academically rather than as active propagandism, were brought to trial and speedily sentenced by the judges to lengthy terms of imprisonment or transportation. The people, although they had parliamentary gov-

ernment and theoretically governed themselves, probably enjoyed less real freedom than at any time of their history since the days of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth. The King, of course, had not the plenitude of power of either of these monarchs; the real power belonged to a small body of territorial magnates, who could actually nominate and secure the election of whomsoever they chose to represent them in Parliament, although nominally these members represented the people. Still, while he retained his faculties, George III. had very real power, for he was able to prevent one of the strongest Ministers of modern times, Pitt, from extending the smallest measure of freedom, civil or political, to the Roman Catholics. It is even said that the pressure brought to bear upon him to induce him to relent, or in other words, to be, as he judged it, untrue to the oath he took as Defender of the Faith at his Coronation, brought on the mental malady from which he suffered during the last twenty years of his life. When it is remembered that the *raison d'être* of his dynasty was the hatred and mistrust of the people of the Papacy, his obstinacy is not difficult to understand.

In any case it may be asserted generally of the people of Great Britain and Ireland, that, until the Reform Bill of 1832 swept away a mass of rotten boroughs and gave the people some measure of political power, the kingdom was really governed by an exceedingly small oligarchy, and that, while

free in name, the people were really minus almost every prerogative of freedom. We are accustomed to-day to regard that passionate expression of this undeniable fact set forth by Shelley in that unrestrained outpouring of a fervid soul, afire with indignant wrath at the suffering of his countrymen, —as a rhapsodical phantasy. But as a matter of sober truth, almost everything that poem contains, so far as its application to practical and contemporary evils is concerned, was justified by the facts. The people were mere cyphers. Their rulers so regarded them. They could not combine for the redress of wrong, or for procuring a better wage in return for their labour. Insignificant crimes, the smallest thefts, were punishable with death or transportation. The Corn Laws were framed exclusively in the interest of the landowners.

Throughout the war with France, which, with a temporary cessation of a few months, lasted from 1793 to 1815, the average price of corn was 84s. a quarter, and a loaf was sometimes priced as high as 1s. 10d. Salt was taxed to forty times its value. Almost every article of food and use—those things which the workingman to-day regards as the necessities of life—was heavily taxed. It has been estimated that the labouring population paid to the Government half its wages in indirect taxation. In a word, though free in name, the great bulk of the people were serfs in fact. Nor can it be said that the colonies were in much better case. The

spirit which animated George IV. when, in sending his friend, Lord Charles Somerset, out to the Cape to serve a second term of office, he frankly averred that he was sending him to fleece the Hottentots—a playfully insulting way of designating the colonists on the part of that graceless prince—animated, in a greater or less degree, every public man of the period, though they drew the line at exploiting the colonists for the benefit of the home exchequer. The West Indies were regarded as mere slave plantations, useful for the production of rum and sugar; Australia was a penal settlement, that and nothing more; the Cape was valued as a place of call from India, and as a sanitorium for Indian troops and Indian officials, and for its strategical importance. Canada was about the only colony in which the root idea of a colony,—or what should be the root idea, that it is a home for the surplus population of the Motherland,—received any kind of recognition; though the settlement of Algoa Bay, the famous colonisation scheme of 1820, marked a fitful acknowledgment of this great truth as regards Africa.

So far as real political freedom is concerned, it cannot be said that the outlying portions of the Empire were in a much worse position than its metropolis. Until the Reform Bill of 1832 was passed, there was, as we have seen, very little real political freedom in the British Isles, and the record of the succeeding years, until the passage of the Redistribution Bill of 1885, had been practically a record

of the gradual completion of the work of which the Act of 1832 was the first step. In other words, the Act of 1832 made possible all those developments along the path of freedom which, without it, could never have been accomplished, save at the price of a violent, as distinguished from a constitutional, revolution. In the colonies themselves, the impulse toward a greater measure of local freedom followed rapidly upon the quickening of that impulse at home, a quickening which sent its pulsating life through all the arteries of the imperial system.

Lord Durham, an enlightened man, owing much of his inspiration to that remarkable thinker and worker in the cause of British imperialism, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, was instrumental in procuring for Canada that system of self-government which, thirty years or so later, culminated in the Federal Union, under which Canada has worked out her destiny as a free nation, with conspicuous credit to herself and to the Empire. The Australian colonies soon began to fall into line, the initiative being taken, as it should have been, by the premier colony, New South Wales. The year 1843 marked the first step in the direction of local autonomy, and in less than ten years, New South Wales was endowed with complete self-government. The other Australasian colonies followed in due season, and now, at the end of the century, Australia is on the eve of inaugurating a federal union* which will make her in every sense of the word a

* A federal union has since been consummated.

nation; indeed, although one has lived too long to dare to prophesy about seeming certainties, it is scarcely to be questioned that by the time this book is published, Australia will have become a Federal Commonwealth, or in other words, a united nation.

The Cape had to tarry until 1872 before responsible government was granted to her, and Natal until 1895. It cannot be said of either colony that the boon of self-government was withheld by Downing Street a moment after the time was ripe for its bestowal, or a day after the people of these colonies had clearly expressed their readiness and anxiety to receive it. Indeed, in the case of the Cape, there is some reason for imagining that Great Britain somewhat anticipated the local demand for complete autonomy. Again, it is impossible to say at the moment whether the termination of the conflict forced upon us by the Transvaal, will eventuate in an imperial mandate under which all South Africa shall be required to enter into federal union; but it will be a great disappointment to persons like myself, who have fought for the imperial principle in South Africa, in and out of season, if the annexation of the Republics, which is obviously inevitable, is not accompanied by some such measure.* So that before the new century opens, we may hope to see two other great dominions, founded more or less on the pattern of Canada, as adjuncts to the Central State of Great Britain and Ireland. This will mean that the larger scheme of imperial federation

* Both Republics were annexed during 1900.

is many steps nearer accomplishment. However these things may fall out, it must be said that, allowing for temporary fluctuations of local feeling, arising from transitory causes provocative of irritation, the policy of cutting the young nations which have sprung from the loins of Albion free from their leading strings, has justified itself by the great increase in the sentiment of loyalty and attachment to the imperial connection which has followed in its train, and in the marvellously rapid development both in freedom and in prosperity which all these communities have made since their political emancipation.

It has been somewhat lightly said of the British Empire that our countrymen founded it in a fit of absence of mind. To give the idea any completeness, it should have been said that we formed it in a succession of such fits. In any case the statement, *jeu d'esprit,* I should say, is true to this extent. Englishmen followed no settled plan or plans in building up the huge Empire which is now the heritage of the nation. Occasionally it is possible to discover some motive of quite secondary importance explanatory of their action.

India was acquired as a field for commercial enterprise, the Cape as a strategical base contingent on our Indian interests, Australia as a convenient "dumping ground" for our convicts, while the conquest of Canada was largely, if not solely, undertaken, in order to oust the French from territory

which gave them the power of interfering with the older American colonies. To these older American colonies we were led mainly by the eagerness of Henry VII. to repair the mistake he made in not taking Columbus under his wing, and thereby securing the gold-producing regions which fell to Spain. Over and above all these more sordid incentives to national expansion, there can be no doubt that in a large measure England's action in founding colonies, was due to what I may call artistic, or at least irresponsible promptings. We love adventure, novelty and danger; it is in our blood, and, despite the saving quality we possess, the power to pull ourselves together at the last moment, we are as a nation born gamblers, born speculators.

It is obvious that the remote chance of acquiring fabulous riches entered into the calculations of those daring spirits who discovered and settled, or conquered and appropriated, those vast regions which lay outside the boundaries of the Old World. These men were, however, quite willing to accept the risk of getting nothing in return for their sacrifices and labours, save the bare reward of excitement and novelty. It is clear that nine in ten of the pioneers of Empire did what they did for the pure love of the thing, while those who came after these pioneers, the syndicates and chartered companies and gentlemen adventurers, to place their shekels on the hazard of the die, are also entitled to be considered primarily as sportsmen. That they

afterwards developed into administrators is due to the fact that they were in the main country gentlemen, or the sons of country gentlemen, in whom the capacity for administration, because they have ruled in their villages, is a rarely wanting inbred faculty.

The English peoples are often spoken of as devoid of imagination; and assuredly they seldom permit themselves to be fired by purely abstract ideals, and are inclined to be indifferent to all ideals, save those which have enough of the practical to make their bearing on the actual well-being of the human family obvious. Still Englishmen are capable of making huge sacrifices for the triumph of any political, ethical, or commercial idea which they have once adopted and made their own. Until quite recently, a great political idea—the idea which, for lack of a better name, we call Imperialism—was little more than a myth to them. Even now, although it has made immense headway during the last fifteen years, and in the last few months the pace has been greatly accelerated, it cannot be said to have fully possessed the British race and carried them along with it in the same manner, or to the same extent, as the ethical idea contained in the propaganda against slavery, possessed and impelled the immediate ancestors of the Englishman of to-day. Still he is about to take up the idea with the same singleness of purpose as he took up those other ideas; the emancipation of the slave, the abolition of the Corn Laws. It falls under the category of ideas which

he is accustomed after a long period of education to accept, and having accepted, to use an expressive colloquialism, to run for all they are worth.

As yet Englishmen have not acknowledged to themselves that purely academic matters, such as art, let us say, have a sufficiently direct bearing upon the well-being of the individual or the nation to be worth treating with the high seriousness the Frenchman instinctively accords to such questions. The intricate problems connected with art may be all important to the artist, but they are scarcely worth, so the average Englishman thinks, his earnest attention or thought; especially as in this, as in other academic questions, he suspects that the result of submitting himself to a rigorous examination of their intricacies might oblige him to abandon tastes which, however much he may secretly doubt their soundness, he has no intention of foregoing. But where any form of human enterprise or endeavour is presented to him, which has to do with the moral or physical well-being of himself, his children or his country—his limitations in recognizing such are of course considerable—it is easy to arouse his enthusiasm, and the more so if the hope to be led or followed is a forlorn one, and the end to be gained is elusive, uncertain and difficult. Hence his persistent interest in the business of expanding the boundary lines of the national domain; there is a chance of practical gain; there is the risk of failure and disappointment; a combination in which his peculiar

genius revels. The latest convincing evidence that this spirit in him is as active as it ever was, is afforded by the marvellous manner in which the shares of the Chartered Company of British South Africa have been taken up and inflated in price by the rank and file of the British public.

Now, what I have already said as to the forces which have conspired to make the British Empire, must be kept well in mind, if we are to understand the erratic manner in which that Empire has come into being. I maintain, and I am sure no one can study the history of the growth of our colonies, or satisfactorily explain the reasons for the ebbs and flows in the tide of imperial progress, without recognising that, notwithstanding the practical considerations which gave the spice of interest and supplied the stakes in the game, the British Empire was founded by men who knew they were playing a game; by men of the true gambler type, who would go on playing, however much the odds might be against them, for the sake of the game itself. Nothing else can explain the indifference with which Englishmen have regarded the results, when these results were of such a nature as to put a period on the game itself. We have often, for instance, thought more of ousting a hated European rival, than of turning our conquest of him to practical account.

While this attitude of mind has saved us from attempting—unless our tardy attempt to tax un-

represented America can be so described—to exploit our colonies for the benefit of stay-at-home Englishmen in the manner of the Spaniards and Portuguese, it has prevented us nearly always from giving much thought and attention to the development of colonies, hardly won, so soon as the strain and stress of winning them was relaxed. So far as this country is concerned, it not only accounts for the extraordinary way in which we have relinquished possessions we spent millions of treasure and innumerable lives to acquire, but for that callous indifference to the well-being of our colonies, that impatient irritation in the face of difficulties, and reluctance to grapple with them and with the consequences and problems growing out of our imperial position, which, throughout the greater part, by far the greater part, of the century, have characterised our extra-insular policy. We began the century well, or to be quite precise, ended the eighteenth century well in this respect.

When, after seven years' struggle with France, in a war which is estimated to have cost us something like £450,000,000 sterling and 100,000 lives, a war in which we had supplied money lavishly, for the most part wasted and diverted to other ends, to half the nations of the Continent, we grew weary of the contest, and of the fearful sacrifices entailed, and concluded the Treaty of Amiens, we practically gave back to France, by whom we had not been conquered, everything we had gained. Pondicherry,

Cochin, Negapatam and the Spice Islands in Asia; Senegal in Africa, and practically the Cape of Good Hope, for that colony, being a dependency of Holland, was subservient to France. In America, St. Pierre and Miquelon, those islands off Newfoundland, which have since proved to be worth their weight in gold to that colony. In the West Indies, Martinique, St. Lucien and Guadeloupe; and in the Mediterranean, Malta. We retained practically nothing save Ceylon and Trinidad.

Of course it is not maintained that this absurd and quite unnecessary sacrifice was entirely due to the fact that we had lost all interest in colonies, though obviously that was in a large measure the case. We were temporarily weary of fighting the battles of the Continent, and of being incontinently filched of our wealth by time-serving and deserting allies. In a passing fit of sanity the twenty-five millions who then constituted the inhabitants of these islands, or their rulers as I should say, recognised that it was madness to stand champion for the whole world, especially when that world treated its benefactor in the most cynical and selfish fashion, and showed plainly that it regarded her as a milch-cow, whose only use was to satisfy its exigent requirements. It was not possible, of course, that a proud and self-reliant people could be satisfied for long with such a peace as that, especially as the French continued to treat this country with every circumstance of insolence, and showed plainly that

they intended to use the possessions which they had regained, as a fulcrum whereby they might wrest the whole of our Empire from us. Put to the touchstone, as we were, of our national spirit, we began to be exceedingly anxious to regain the influence and the territory we had bartered away for a shabbier mess of pottage than ever betrayed the senses of Esau into renouncing his birthright. We pulled ourselves together; and this time with the settled determination not only to oust Napoleon from every position where he could menace us, but to wipe him off the board altogether.

So far as the assumption of the rôle of Universal Deliverer was concerned, it was probably as ill-advised as it was Quixotic. Napoleon repeatedly said that if we had confined ourselves to protecting our island and its dependencies he would have been powerless to harm us. But this did not suffice for us. It was only in keeping with the knight-errantry of the British character that we should have desired to make all our arch-enemy's enemies our friends; and that we should have aspired tofight their battles for them. Europe has been accustomed to complain, throughout the greater part of this century, of our selfishness and isolation; of our reluctance, or rather of our settled determination not to involve ourselves in quarrels, or to champion causes, however just, unless our interests demanded it.

But Europe forgets that we saddled ourselves with a national debt, the interest on which still ab-

sorbs about a quarter of our national revenue, in order to free Europe from the autocrat who kept her under his heel. It has been stated, and the figures are probably approximately true, that from first to last our twenty years' war with France cost this country £2,000,000,000 sterling and a million lives. Now, as Napoleon said, had we been entirely selfish in meeting him, had we confined ourselves to attacking him where he menaced us, we should have gained all that we did gain, and far more at a cost comparatively insignificant. This is true. It is true, too, that in diverting the pecuniary resources and fighting qualities of the nation to the business of intermeddling in Continental politics, the nation has been, directly in any case, an enormous loser.

It must not be forgotten however, that out of the hurly-burly of these eighteenth and nineteenth century wars came all our colonies; not all, as in the case of Canada, India and Australia by conquest, but the immediate necessity occasioned by these wars, the creation of an all-powerful navy, made it possible for us to acquire the others—Australia, to wit—and made it possible for us to retain our hold on all of them. That these wars did more for Great Britain than this may be presently shown. The supreme effort which Nelson made at Trafalgar secured for us that naval supremacy never before firmly established, and never since successfully challenged, which is to-day the *sine qua non* of our national, as it is of our imperial, existence. We are

really indebted to Napoleon for forcing us to assume this position.

But naval supremacy, imagined to-day to be sufficient for our defence, did not satisfy our ancestors. Step by step, fighting against almost insuperable difficulties and obstacles, Wellington set himself the task of compelling the magnificent fighting machine Napoleon had evolved, to acknowledge itself inferior to the still more magnificent fighting machine he had created. Throughout six years of patient toil, the weary stages of the Peninsular war, he perfected this machine. I have said just now that the terrible sacrifices and stupendous exertions of that twenty years' war, did something for us over and above establishing our navy and our Empire. It created simultaneously the grit in the people themselves, which has throughout the best part of a century enabled them not only to retain and uphold both, but to people those colonies which remained to us at the end of this Titanic contest, with men and women endowed with the high qualities of an imperial race.

The war left us exhausted, impoverished; to outward appearance listless and bankrupt. But so strong a stimulus did it supply to those puissant qualities of our race, always present with it, though sometimes obscured, that it is a fact, and this fact is one of the marvels of history, that throughout the war, the commerce and wealth of England grew with amazing strides, despite the in-

tense sufferings and privations it entailed upon the people. But the hour of their deliverance was at hand. Men's thoughts everywhere were kindling for a new birth. In literature Shelley, Byron and Keats were stirring the dry bones of thought and bringing forth a new message to the world; a message of freedom; of nature worship and of universal love. Science, both in an academic and in a practical sense, was placing itself at the service of man's intellect, and putting into his hands myriad appliances whereby he might obliterate space and combat disease.

The truth of the matter is that war quickened men's pulses, as the suffering it entailed quickened their spiritual and intellectual activities; and within the small confines of these islands, a great heart began to beat which presently made itself felt at the very extremities of the huge dominion of which they had come to be the centre. What was to result from this pulsation was not seen; not so much as dimly suspected. Men left these isles in thousands, and in leaving, took with them all unconsciously their moiety of that vigorous confidence in the potentialities of their race, which the glorious issue of the twenty years' struggle with one of the most powerful combinations and personalities the world has seen—implanted in their breasts. They left their native land in sorrow, it is true; sometimes in anger and disgust at the hard conditions which made life impossible at home. They had no thought,

perhaps, that they were going to build up in other zones, mighty bulwarks for the country they were leaving, because it could not feed them. In England, assuredly, no such thought was officially whispered. So far as emigration found any encouragement, it was mainly on the prosaic plea that it kept the unemployed off the rates. Nor did the meaning of what was shaping itself in the womb of the unknown, glimmer in the intelligence of the British race for many a long day. The dreary days of darkness which led up to the doctrines of separation, openly avowed and preached by the Manchester School, had to be lived through.

At last, fitfully, the truth began to be perceived and presently to be proclaimed in words of fervid conviction by the earlier prophets of the imperial idea, the idea of a federated race of free nations, owing allegiance to one Sovereign, and to one code of laws, all upholding the torch of freedom and liberty, of enlightenment and progress and of orderly government in the face of the whole world; —all presenting a splendid spectacle of a united Empire, a free people of many nations upon which the sun never sets—to a world at first envious, but finally, as we believe, admiring. For the banner of this Empire is not advanced or to be advanced with defiance, but with the resolute purpose to preserve the unity of the peoples marshalled under it against all and every comer.

The impulses which made for this wonderful re-

sult, entirely unperceived in their inception, were the same old predilections towards a practical ideal, that same determined and sturdy independence in thought and action which has always been the heritage of our race. The great truth has dawned upon the Englishman in every part of the world, that in order to conserve that individual liberty which has been an Englishman's most cherished possession since he gradually emancipated himself from Norman domination, and to secure himself from a repetition of the fate which overtook him at Battle, he must stand shoulder to shoulder with the men of his blood under whatsoever sky they may be found. Therein lies his security, and therein the pledge for the continuance throughout the ages of those glorious pages of his history with which his achievements have enriched the record of the past.

CHAPTER II.

GROWTH OF THE IMPERIAL IDEA.

THE imperial idea as we understand it to-day: a number of free nations banded together under one sovereignty, whether that sovereignty be vested in an elective Chief Magistrate, or in an hereditary Monarch, seems scarcely to have entered into the mental purview or calculation of the statesmen of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, although, as Professor Seeley has remarked, Milton pictured England as standing with all her daughter-lands about her. None the less, in Milton's day the imperial idea was purely speculative, for although Cromwell, who had some glimmering of it, did much to establish England in the domination of the seas, our colonies in his day were insignificant in comparison with those of Spain and Portugal. So far as our American colonies were concerned, the very manner of their settlement, in the main by religious refugees, and in a less degree by political insurgents, was not favourable to the perpetuation in any marked degree of a strong sentiment of attachment to the Mother Country. They certainly had no tolerance for that antiquated form of imperialism which Lord North presented to them, when he at-

tempted to make them, unwilling and unrepresented, contributors to the revenues of the Home Government. Lord North's blunder seems inexcusable to those who can be very wise after the event; but there was plenty of justification for his policy, though none for his unwise way of pursuing it. With that however I am hardly concerned, only so far as the cession of America in 1783 may be said to have influenced this country's attitude toward her colonies then existing, and afterwards to be founded. That this abandonment of sovereignty did greatly influence the trend of popular thought and official action is indisputable. For a while England seemed to have become listlessly indifferent to colonies, of which attitude the extraordinary renunciation at Amiens in 1802 of all that we had gained by our seven years' war with France, may be taken as evidence. It is true that a few years sufficed to recreate in us the spirit of military imperialism; though it can scarcely be said that we valued those extra-insular possessions which one by one we added to our empire, for themselves, but rather as the outward insignia of power, and because they increased our importance in the scale of nations. Considerations of trade were not left out of our calculations; they influenced our policy in greater or less degree; but not, I think, so greatly as most writers and historians are inclined to maintain.

As time went on, and the colonies under our flag began to grow in area, population and wealth, the

conviction that they were hastening to achieve their destiny in distinct and separate existence, seems to have taken possession of all, or nearly all our public men. What America had done, it was thought Canada, Australia and South Africa would undoubtedly do, so soon as they were respectively and individually strong enough to demand their independence. It is not too much to say that English statesmen became impatient at the dilatoriness of the colonies: they went so far as to endeavour to hasten the day when they should ask for complete separation from the Motherland. Lord Salisbury recently said in his haste, that Africa was the plague of all Foreign Ministers, and it is undeniable that some such sentiment with a wider application, for it embraced all the colonies, animated succeeding Foreign Ministers throughout the early part of the century, and was still operative when under Lord Aberdeen's Administration (1852–55) it was first found expedient to segregate the affairs of the colonies under a department of their own. Hitherto they had been administered by the Secretary of State for War.

Mr. Froude tells us that when Lord Palmerston became Colonial Secretary, he had so little idea of the geographical situation of the countries he had undertaken to govern, that he begged a friend to get him maps and show him "where the places were." The story, with a score of its kind with which I might encumber these pages, is perhaps of

the *ben trovato* order, for Lord Palmerston was, I believe, never Colonial Secretary, but it sufficiently indicates the mental attitude of Ministers at Home who presided over the destinies of the colonies. Cold indifference and studious neglect were all the outlying portions of the Empire had to expect from the Motherland. No doubt this treatment had its compensations. There is nothing children desire so much as to be left alone by their elders, so that they may mature their own plans undeterred by sage advice and grave admonishings, to them wholly superfluous. But when they think they have accomplished unaided something which deserves recognition and praise, they look eagerly for their reward, and are bitterly disappointed if their parents and guardians withhold it from them. It cannot be denied that this is very much what happened to the colonies throughout the first three quarters of the century. The stay-at-home Briton questioned their utility, and grudged the outlay they occasioned. South Africa and New Zealand particularly were constantly involving us in costly military operations. No colony contributed to the home revenue; in brief the feeling of Great Britain throughout the early part of the Queen's reign, when the narrow tenets of the so-called Manchester School were ascendant, was very much that of an impatient father who resents the disposition on the part of able-bodied and capable sons to continue in dependence upon him, at an age when, as it seems to him, they are

old enough and strong enough to walk alone. I do not say the feeling was justified, nor is the analogy, for the colonies are daughters and not sons. Moreover at that time they were, so far from being full-grown children, really little more than promising bantlings. This in any case was true of many of them. But however unreasonable, this view of our colonies, almost universally entertained at home, was such as I have indicated.

It would be difficult to set down with precision at what particular moment this short-sighted and ungenerous view of our colonial dependencies began to give way to more magnanimous sentiments. The view prevailed, as I have said, all through the earlier part of the century; and was still operative when the Queen had completed the first forty years of her reign. There were, it is true, a few writers and thinkers who cherished the traditions of Burke and of the Younger Pitt, and in whom the teachings of Adam Smith were still an active force. But their voices were feeble: they cried unheeded in the wilderness, and the echo they evoked was but the reverberation of their own words. In examining the literature on the subject, it is significant—an accidental significance if the point is insisted upon—that the first published work of the century which set forth the great idea, for which so many stalwarts have since fought, that the colonies and the Motherland must be incorporated and form one universal and indivisible Empire, appeared in 1839, two years

after the accession of Her Majesty. In 1857, the desire of the Australian colonies to be represented in the British Parliament made itself articulate in the metropolis at a meeting held at the London Tavern, Mr. W. C. Wentworth in the chair, Canada having two years previously, and on several immediately subsequent occasions, made a like claim, her spokesman being the Hon. Joseph Howe, who continued through many years to uphold the cause of colonial representation in the Imperial Parliament. It may be taken however, as a broad fact, not exactly true of course, that the persistent advocacy of the cause of imperial unity synchronises with the establishment, in 1868, of the Royal Colonial Institute. As we have seen, the tendencies making for the recognition of this great cause had received direct stimulus in earlier years. Among its harbingers, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, a name ever to be remembered and held in honour by Englishmen, must be specially mentioned; while obviously before such an organisation as the Royal Colonial Institute could be founded in ever so humble a way, and it is not denied that it owed its origin to tentative, experimental, and modest beginnings, a good deal of pioneer work had to be done, and done it was by enthusiastic believers in the potentialities of our race; men who had that most splendid and rare of all political gifts, the power to deduce from the past and present a working thesis as to the future; men that is to say endowed with proleptic

imagination, informed by deductive reasoning and able, so equipped, to take time by the forelock. It is not possible in the compass of this work to do more than generalise, else it would be my duty to linger over this factor in the forces making for imperial unity and imperial growth—the personal equation, and to sing the praises of those sturdy pioneers of a great cause, who in those early days kept alive the faith in the high destinies of the British race.

Edward Gibbon Wakefield stands foremost among these enlightened patriots. This brave soul was untiring in sowing the good seed. It fell for the most part on stony ground, but some of it, happily for our nation, chanced on congenial soil and brought forth fruit in due season. Concurrently with the establishment of the Colonial Institute, a noble army of workers entered the field—William Westgarth, Fox Bourne for remembrance, but the persistent workers who after Wakefield, from whom all caught the fire which lighted their torches, must be regarded as the linkmen of imperial unity, are Francis de Labillière, Frederick Young, and John C. R. Colomb. There were many others, but these three are the real fathers of the imperial idea in our day and generation. The first has now gone to the Silence land, but the others happily remain, and continue the good fight to which they have devoted their lives. As I have said they had their forerunners, and they have had, too, their numberless

successors. And of these, many names bulk far more prominently in the public eye, than those of the real protagonists of the movement. The careless are deceived into imagining that those politicians and statesmen who at the eleventh hour, from conviction or convenience, associate themselves with causes which have been made possible by single-minded workers entirely dissociated from and superior to the game of politics, are the real authors of great national movements; the student knows otherwise. It was greatly to the credit of such men as W. E. Forster and W. H. Smith that they grasped the significance of tendencies they had done little or nothing to stimulate or to create, and which they did not recognise until their attention was compelled by their healthy growth. In later times it has been greatly to the credit of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, a man bred in the narrow school of parochial politics, that he developed in the prime of life the receptivity which enabled him to absorb and assimilate ideas to which in his youth he was antagonistic, or in any case indifferent. While all this must be acknowledged, we must not be blinded to the fact that the real pioneers of imperial unity, the men who from their youth upward have given of their best to secure the triumph of the cause, are not and never were professional politicians. They have held aloof from party politics, the factions fighting for place and office, and are therefore to be trusted to work some good for the national welfare, instead of be-

traying the nation to its ruin. Party politics have nearly accomplished this fell result over and over again during the century, and before its close they may have become responsible for an irreparable national disaster. But of this danger I must speak in its proper place.

In the great cause of imperial unity many names as I have said might be mentioned in addition to those already singled out. Those of the late Sir George Baden-Powell, Sir Charles Nugent, Mr. Arnold-Forster and Sir Howard Vincent must not be omitted; nor must I forget colonial workers. Sir Julius Vogel in New Zealand; Sir Harry Parkes in Australia; General Laurie, Sir Charles Tupper and George R. Parkin in Canada; Sir George Grey at the Cape and Sir John Robinson in Natal. Such men as Professor Seeley and James Anthony Froude, men of splendid literary power and ripe scholarship, belong to the Empire. Professor Seeley's *Expansion of England* did not appear until 1884 and Mr. Froude's *Oceana* was given to the public in 1886. Before these books saw the light, the ideas which they did so much to elucidate and popularise were already fructifying; the good seed having been freely sown during the decade which preceded their publication. Great as was the service both these able writers rendered the imperial cause, that service cannot be regarded as in any way equal to that of the pioneers of whom I have already spoken; men who devoted their lives to making these ideas pos-

sible at a time when the popular ear was hermetically sealed to such teaching. I repeat then, that the real fathers of this movement toward imperial unity, were Francis de Labillière, Frederick Young and J. C. R. Colomb. These men, and Sir Frederick Young is their *doyen,* have worked incessantly in and out of season to bring home to the popular mind the splendid potentialities bound up in this magnificent idea, and the vital benefits contingent upon its acceptance.

I should, however, be doing a great injustice were I to omit to mention a silent influence, unperceived by the mass of the people and almost unrecognised by their leaders, which has contributed immeasurably toward the general acceptance of the imperial idea. The Queen's place in the Constitution, and her loyal observance of the limitations imposed upon her direct control of public affairs, have veiled from the world the fact that Her Majesty has exercised her influence almost from the first to strengthen the ties which bound her colonies to the Crown and to Great Britain, and to minimise and neutralise all those unfortunate mistakes or misunderstandings which have tended toward the disruption of the Empire. This fact has become patent now; but when the lapse of years has relieved Her Majesty's Ministers, or their descendants and representatives, from the obligations which now compel their silence, it will be far more patent. Obviously the influence of the Prince Con-

sort, who early grasped the imperial idea, must be accorded its proper weight, when we praise the far-sighted prescience of our Sovereign. But I shall have to refer to the splendid services the Queen's husband rendered the Empire over and over again in these pages: to my mind no single Englishman of the reign has exercised a more beneficial and salutary influence over the nation than Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg.

When the Queen came to the throne the colonies were regarded, it is not too much to say so, as inconvenient encumbrances, and this way of looking at them still obtained when the various Canadian colonies were united into one commonwealth in 1867. Neither is it too much to say that half of the support given at home to the policy of confederating these colonies, came from men who thought that they were aiding a movement which would culminate in Canada becoming an independent state. Even as late as 1874, when Lord Carnarvon sent Mr. Froude on his ill-omened visit to South Africa in the belief that he would bring about a confederation of the various South African colonies, many of the politicians who favored this project, based their support on the hope that its accomplishment would pave the way to the assumption on the part of the South African colonies, not only of complete autonomy, but complete independence. Of course the Government had no such intention.

It may be said however, that with the exception

of Lord Carnarvon and Mr. Forster, no statesman of the first rank had definitely committed himself to the policy of permanent legislative union between England and her colonies, until the Conference on Imperial Federation held at the Westminster Palace Hotel on July 29, 1884, brought together all, or nearly all, the old workers for that cause, and with them a respectable contingent of statesmen and politicians of the first rank who had not previously associated themselves with it.

It will be seen, therefore, that the Queen anticipated all her Ministers, and nearly all her subjects as a firm upholder of the imperial idea. Many proofs of this might be given, but none is more conclusive than her warm support of Sir George Grey in the fifties, when that splendid public servant endeavoured to consolidate Her Majesty's dominions, and to establish firmly her sovereignty in South Africa. If the Queen had had her way, Grey would have accomplished his purpose, and spared the Empire many a bitter experience. But she was overruled by her wilful and ignorant Ministers, and Grey and the Empire were sacrificed. Throughout her reign, the Queen has shown that she has fully appreciated the magnificent position which has come to her by inheritance, and her determination to maintain that inheritance in all its glory. Of course, as a constitutional monarch, her powers are very limited, and she has been constantly checkmated by her Ministers. But the Queen has been

wiser than her Ministers. For nearly half a century these Ministers took scant pains to conceal their indifference to the colonies, and their impatience at their reluctance to take the hints, brutally administered to them, to cut themselves adrift from the Motherland. So far as it has lain in her power, the Queen has done everything to foster the growth of a healthier imperial feeling and to stimulate latent Imperialism wherever it was to be found. She has always supported her pro-consuls in the difficult task of upholding the authority of the Crown against those traitors at home and traitors abroad who, too often throughout her reign, have wreaked their sweet will to the irreparable damage of the Empire. I have referred already to the memorable instance of Sir George Grey. It would carry me beyond the scope of this work, were I to attempt to follow in minute detail the story of Sir George Grey's splendid services to the Empire and his ungrateful, not to say base desertion by Downing Street. Mr. Castell Hopkins has told us how the Queen stood by her Viceroy, and we have to-day, as we have had on many a previous day, to regret that she was not able to give him anything much more substantial than moral support, although she did all she could to prevent his recall from the Cape and brought all her influence to bear to secure his reinstatement. Sir George Grey was a born Empire-maker. His services as an explorer in Western Australia secured for him the appointment as first Governor of South

Australia. He did wonders there, restoring order, and turning mutiny, ruin and discontent into contentment and prosperity. Four years later he was sent to New Zealand, and he accomplished even greater things in that colony, bringing cosmos out of chaos. For a technical, a small sin against the majesty of the Colonial Office, he was sent to Coventry. But when our traditional policy of shuffle and desertion in South Africa had brought things to a dangerous crisis there, Sir George Grey was remembered, as strong men are apt to be remembered in the hour of need. He was sent out to see what he could do. In two consecutive years we had thrown away the Transvaal and Orange Free State, thrown them away with curses at the continual trouble and expense in which they involved us, curses which have come home to roost throughout the half century which has elapsed since then. So Sir George Grey was marked out as the best man, almost the only man clearly indicated by his record and achievements, to get us out of the difficulties created by our pusillanimity. He found a way, but he was deserted as Sir Bartle Frere was a quarter of a century later. Sir Alfred Milner has taken up the ravelled skein, and——

But this is to anticipate. I cannot deal with history in the making. The To be or Not to be of the Empire is likely to be settled one way or the other before the century closes. It must surely be settled in the affirmative. If not, what a sorry anti-climax the whole of these pages must become.

What the Queen thought of Sir Bartle Frere's desertion, it is too early to learn. From what that much-sinned-against man wrote soon after his recall in 1880, we can very easily guess what she thought. In any case she deeply resented the desertion of Sir George Grey, and has put on record her utter abhorrence of the treatment meted out by her Government to another great servant of the Crown—the gallant Gordon. Grey governed the black races with wisdom and authority, and made the name of the Queen loved and respected throughout that portion of the sub-continent we then controlled and beyond it. He did wonders; accomplished marvels. At the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny he took upon himself to send all available troops and stores from Cape Town to Calcutta, and went even further, directing the transports calling at the Cape, on their way to China, to make for Calcutta instead. There can be no doubt that the Queen's strong approval of his conduct influenced the Colonial Secretary in his own warm encomium of these acts—acts *ultra vires* though they were. He was commanded to express Her Majesty's approbation of her Viceroy's patriotic action. Such a man was and is after the Queen's own heart. A man who, in a moment of crisis and danger, can take a wise decision in the interest of the Empire and act upon it boldly and unflinchingly, unmindful of the risks and dangers to himself—such a man is fit servant to an Imperial Queen. In a private let-

ter Sir George Grey was assured of the Queen's admiration and content. But, despite the Queen's approval and the Colonial Office's endorsement of that approval,—a reluctant endorsement one may be sure, since it is an unforgivable sin to offend the majesty and sense of importance of any of the public offices,—it was not long before the intrepid High Commissioner was again in trouble with Downing Street, or, as I should say, before Downing Street was in trouble with him. This time the matter arose out of the bad faith of the Government in repudiating their engagement to supply the German Legion in South Africa with wives to be sent out from Germany, and Sir George Grey's action in sending the unmarried men to the Governor of Bombay to battle for the Empire. The Queen again supported her pro-consul. Disagreement after disagreement followed: exhibitions of unwisdom on the part of Downing Street and of dignified patience on the part of the sorely tried High Commissioner. At last, a resolution of the Volksraad of the Orange Free State, favouring a union or an alliance with Cape Colony, gave Sir George Grey an opportunity of supplementing his luminous report on the affairs of South Africa by another in which he contended —and his case was as strong inherently as it was well-reasoned—that the hour had arrived when the states and colonies of South Africa should draw together in federal union. For speaking thus; for showing the way whereby a most difficult and irri-

tating problem might be solved, Grey was roundly abused by the Colonial Office, and in the end recalled. Now, as I have pointed out many times in recent years, and as Mr. Castell Hopkins has incisively shown, Sir George Grey's real sin was, that instead of pointing the way to the total abandonment of South Africa at the earliest possible moment at which this policy could be with outward decency effected, he advocated a course which would bind us still closer to South Africa. This was in 1858, when all parties in the State were possessed of the insane idea, an *idée fixe,* that the sooner Great Britain should lop off all the colonies, the better for her immediate and ultimate interest. Throughout the greater part of the century the colonies have been in the keeping of incompetent statesmen, men like the two Stanleys, the elder Lord Derby and his son, men who had all the appearance of strength, but who were really far from being so strong as they appeared, and Lord Lytton (Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton), as superficial and incapable as a statesman, as he was animated and stimulating as a writer of light fiction. Then there was another disappointing statesman, Lord Granville, who attempted his rose-water dalliance on the Iron Chancellor, and in so doing raised up for us a hornet's nest of trouble and difficulty in South Africa, a part of the world, as I read history, seriously neglected by the Derby Administration. These were the men whom our immediate ancestors too implicitly trusted. Had

Sir George Grey been given a free hand, had Sir Bartle Frere, a little later, been left to his own devices, we should have been out of the African wood long ago, and the history of Her Majesty's South African dominions would not have contained that unhappy and disgraceful chapter, the Jameson raid, nor would the strong measures for suppressing the Africander conspiracy to oust Great Britain from the sub-continent, which Sir Alfred Milner initiated, have been necessary.

Sir George Grey, the greatest of all England's pro-consuls during the century, would have spared us all that we are now suffering. By this time the two races of European origin in South Africa would have been in a fair way to become one race. But Lord Derby was determined that he must go, and the Queen's forceful language was all in vain. Lord Derby told Mr. Greville that the Queen was strongly prepossessed in Sir George Grey's favour, and that she contemplated his removal with feelings of repugnance. He afterwards admitted that he was afraid a mistake had been made, and, as we have seen, Sir George was almost immediately reinstated, though it was on the distinct understanding that he was to drop federation wholly and definitively. We are finding out to-day what that has cost the country. I am worrying this subject purposely, because I want to show that the incompetence, the "craven fear of being great;" the intolerable self-sufficiency of a careless, doubting, neglectful Co-

lonial Office have ever been the cause of our colonial troubles. The Governors on the spot have almost always risen to a sense of their duties, and have generally been fully equal to them, but until Mr. Chamberlain took the seals of the Colonial Office we had had few Colonial Secretaries, always excepting Lord Carnarvon and Edward Stanhope, who were not above their business. Lord Carnarvon made, and Mr. Chamberlain has made mistakes; but Mr. Chamberlain, like Lord Carnarvon before him, has attempted to understand the problems with which he was called upon to deal. Obviously no man ought to be considered qualified for the post of Colonial Secretary, unless he has a personal and extensive knowledge of the colonies. So far as Sir George Grey was concerned, it was a case with him of the Queen and Grey against the whole might of the Lords and Commons; and the superior wisdom of these august assemblies carried the day.

Mr. Castell Hopkins, in his admirable book, *The Life and Reign of Queen Victoria,* tells of many other instances and ways in which Her Majesty has striven to counteract the Little Englanders. The Queen's strong imperialism has worked for the good of the Empire in another way, for apart from that sense of loyalty which comes traditionally to the Englishman, and especially to Englishmen engaged in the business of protecting and administrating the Empire, the Queen has been able tc

evoke a sense of loyalty personal to herself in the breast of all men imbued with the imperial idea; while the knowledge that a common aim and sympathy existed between them and their Sovereign, the person designated by her position as the natural head of the Empire, and as its upholder and defender, has bound to the Throne a whole army of public servants, causing them to do and dare more for the honour and glory of the Empire than they could or would have done or dared, had they not been supported and encouraged by the affection and reverence they felt for their august mistress.

I have introduced at this moment this brief story of the Queen's part in upholding the best traditions of imperialism, because chronologically it falls into place here, and because in telling it, I am able to emphasise and substantiate my contention that, however much the imperial idea might have taken possession of men in the services, until the foundation of the Imperial Federation League in 1884 scarcely any prominent politician or statesman had openly associated himself with the imperial cause. Even before the Royal Colonial Institute was founded in 1868, isolated statesmen, even statesmen in office, had occasionally referred, with such expression of mitigated enthusiasm as the occasion demanded, to the growing wealth and importance of our "dependencies," for that was the word most in favour in those days. The word is, of course, harmless enough, if properly qualified and understood, but

it was not so qualified or understood by these speakers. As we have seen, neither the union of Canada in 1867, nor the attempted union of South Africa in 1873 can be taken, save so far as Lord Carnarvon is concerned, to represent an endorsement of the creed that the Empire must remain one and indivisible in fact, and the fact is unpleasantly obvious, that the majority of these supporters of intercolonial federation regarded that policy as a means to the end most earnestly desired—the disintegration of the Empire.

We all know that the Imperial Federation League failed to accomplish the actual purpose to which it owed its existence, which was "to secure by federation the permanent unity of the Empire." But its dissolution was due to the conviction of a majority of its members that it had succeeded in the main purpose of its existence, in that it had made the cause it bore on its banner the cause of nearly every responsible thinker in England. It had done more. It was the means of compelling almost every statesman and politician of importance, to declare openly and solemnly his assent to the principle involved. That being so, and action being the prerogative of the men who sit in the seats of the mighty, nothing remained to be done, save to wait for the arrival of that psychological moment when academic truths should be interpreted into vital facts. Since the League has been instrumental in getting the subject discussed from every point of view, and

it neither aspired nor presumed to formulate a definite scheme of federal union, but trusted rather to the gradual movement toward that end resulting from the steady growth of natural forces, it must be allowed that it had done its work. Its occupation was gone, and its continued existence might have led to mischievous results, since some of its members were endeavouring to force it to adopt a more concrete and aggressive policy.

It cannot be denied however, that the Imperial Federation League centred and epitomised the federal movement, or that during its nine years' life it was the active force, or rather contained within itself all the active forces making for federal unity. The present writer recalls that memorable occasion, the Conference held on the 29th July, 1884, at the Westminster Palace Hotel, at which the first steps were taken towards forming the Imperial Federation League. It was attended by the High Commissioner for Canada (Sir Charles Tupper), the Agent-General for the Cape (Captain, afterwards Sir Charles, Mills), the Agent-General for New South Wales (Sir Saul Samuel), the Marquis of Normanby and several other ex-Colonial Governors, by Mr. W. E. Forster and Mr. W. H. Smith, both statesmen who had occupied important positions in former Cabinets. The first general committee of the League contained the names of some of the most distinguished men in England and the colonies, men renowned in politics, the Services, in scholarship,

and in letters and commerce. A few of these names taken alphabetically and almost at random will suffice to indicate that in 1885 Imperial Federation had already gained the support of many men of light and leading. The list included Sir Henry Barkly, Sir Algernon Borthwick (Lord Glenesk), Sir Thomas Brassey (Lord Brassey), Mr. James Bryce, Lord Brabazon (Lord Meath), Lord Brabourne, Professor Montagu Burrows, Captain Colomb (Sir John), Sir Daniel Cooper, Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, H. O. Arnold-Forster, Sir Alexander Galt, Viscount Hampden, Henniker Heaton, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Sir John Lubbock, Sir John Macdonald, the Duke of Manchester, the Hon. J. X. Merriman, Sir Lyon Playfair (Lord Playfair), Sir Rawson Rawson, Professor Seeley (Sir John Seeley), and Lord Tennyson. When, in 1893, the League was dissolved, it would be far easier to make a list of men of the first rank in the councils of the Empire who were not included in the list of its members, than to give the names of those who were. During its eight or nine years' life the League accomplished, as I have already indicated, great things. The journal of the League penetrated to the remotest part of the Empire, and members of the League ventilated its aims by speech and lecture in every town, I might almost say every village, in the United Kingdom. The colonies formed branches and took up the work, Canada being especially energetic. It is significant that the League met with

considerable opposition in some of the Australian towns, while it made scant headway in South Africa. Assuredly all the missionary work it accomplished was needful, and assuredly it has brought forth fruit in abundance. I know from personal experience how dim and dull the sentiment of attachment to the Mother Country had become in the case of a large proportion of the upgrowing colonists, both of the Cape and Natal. I found young men, in some cases, men belonging to old, not to say historic, houses at home, absolutely devoid of this sentiment of attachment. It is to be feared that this feeling was largely engendered by the men England began to send in increasing numbers to her colonies, so soon as the era of big steamships increased the facilities for treating our so-called dependencies as dumping-grounds for damaged human goods. Here at home the belief that England was merely a foster-mother for young nations which would speedily leave her, was still the belief of Englishmen, especially in the provinces, among the class which troubled itself to think on such questions at all. To this I can also speak from personal knowledge; and I can also testify to the change of view which a man of energy, who took the trouble to inform the bucolic mind, was able to effect after a few months' lecturing and hammering at the subject.

In this, and in countless other ways, the Imperial Federation League fully justified its existence. The journal which recorded its work lies before me in

some eight or nine volumes. They are a mine of information and statistics; so rich indeed, that in renewing my acquaintance with them, I find myself confused by the amplitude of detail, all bearing on the question of how best to conserve and strengthen the ties which bind together Great Britain and her colonies.

The Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886 was another potent agency making for the imperial idea, an object lesson so full of interest and attraction that the most casual and indifferent Britisher could not fail to absorb something of its more esoteric meaning. It was undoubtedly the most popular of all the exhibitions held at South Kensington. Initiated in 1884 and organised by a Royal Commission presided over by the Prince of Wales, it contained among its members almost every prominent statesman from every part of the Empire. The beneficial influence this exhibition exercised over the popular mind is not to be exaggerated. Not only were the products of the Empire brought directly under the notice of the people of Great Britain, but it is obvious that this evidence of astonishing growth and vitality operated on the mind of the civilised world, and prompted European powers to enter upon that era of colonial enterprise which, although it has brought with it an increase of our immediate troubles and anxieties, will, I believe, in the final event prove to have had its compensations, for it has stimulated the colonies to

healthy emulation; brought home to the mind of the Motherland their value; and by making Europe a partner in the cause of world-wide civilisation, it has minimised the difficulty (not immediately, of course, I am looking at the ultimate issue) of dealing with the numerous perplexing problems involved in the humane and sensible treatment of aboriginal peoples.

The Indian and Colonial Exhibition was not contented to educate through the medium of the eye alone; almost every other day, if I remember aright, meetings were held in the Conference room and subjects of the highest imperial moment were discussed by men competent to elucidate them. The press took care to disseminate this knowledge throughout the length and breadth of the Kingdom, I might say Empire, and it is impossible to doubt that these meetings were educational media of the utmost value and importance.

Then came the first Imperial Conference, summoned on the 25th November, 1886, by the Right Hon. Edward Stanhope, Secretary of State for the Colonies, in a despatch addressed to the Governors of all colonies under responsible government. This despatch, after referring to a passage in the Queen's speech which announced her conviction that there was a growing desire on all sides to draw closer in every practical way the bonds which united the various portions of the Empire, declared the intention of Her Majesty's Government to convene a confer-

ence to deal with the matter in the early part of the coming year. This conference was held in April and May, and did excellent pioneer work, to which reference will be made hereafter.

This year (1887), the year of the Jubilee celebration of the Queen's fifty years' reign, gave a most powerful stimulant to the imperial idea. The spectacle of the revered Sovereign of these realms, surrounded by the representatives of a score and a half colonies, fostered sentiments of latent loyalty and accentuated such feelings where they were already dominant. Ten years later a far more striking object lesson was presented to the people of the Empire. The Queen celebrated the sixtieth year of her reign, and on her way to St. Paul's was accompanied by nearly all the Premiers of her self-governing colonies, and by contingents from the forces, native and colonial, of every dependency of the Crown. It is worthy of note that the colonial statesmen and troops, if we except the Queen and her family, proved to be the central points of interest in the whole procession, being acclaimed by the populace with great fervour and enthusiasm, which, while it exceeded the reception accorded to the British troops and to the royal and exalted personages representing every country in the civilised world, gave token to those who, not having watched the signs of the times, were unprepared for so convincing a revelation, that the man in the street, the humblest of the people, had caught the sentiment of Empire,

and was, it is scarcely too much to say, as proud of the wide-world dominion of Her Majesty as any of the great administrators, statesmen and warriors who formed her immediate *entourage*. That the Queen had silently but surely worked to secure the permanence of the imperial connection, upon which so many of her Ministers had sought to put a period, has gradually become recognised by her subjects, and no doubt the recognition of this fact has had much to do with the wonderful growth of her personal popularity, and in the attachment of the people to the monarchical principle during the last quarter of a century. The writer of these pages was a witness, when a boy, of the Royal Procession to St. Paul's to offer up thanks on the recovery of the Prince of Wales from the dangerous illness which threatened his life. Mingling with the crowd, many expressions, not only of mitigated loyalty, but of disrespect to the Throne, and even worse than disrespect, fell upon his ears. In the summer of 1899 he chanced to be caught up and detained by a crowd of workingfolk, who were waiting at Knightsbridge to see Her Majesty as she made her way to lay the foundation stone of the Victoria Museum at South Kensington. The expressions of good-will to the Sovereign, audible everywhere, were universal on the part of the populace. Over a quarter of a century had elapsed since the Thanksgiving Service, and during that time a remarkable change had come over the people. In 1872 loyalty to the Throne was

for the most part of a conventional and perfunctory order; but at the end of the century, the Queen has only to appear among her subjects, to be sure that the expressions of devotion to her person and her dynasty will be as sincere as they are hearty.

I am aware that the novelty of this statement, so far as it indicates that the people were not always loyal, will induce nine in ten readers to challenge its accuracy. It has been so much the custom among historians and publicists to declare that the Queen has been universally popular throughout her long reign that, to make the assertion that she was not entirely popular in 1872, is to defy a whole crowd of witnesses. Nevertheless, it is a fact. The seclusion of the Queen's life after she lost her husband, the Prince Consort, was resented by all sections of the people, pleasure-lovers, pageant-lovers and tradesmen. But the matter lies deeper. It must be remembered that it fell to the Queen to re-establish the monarchical principle as an active force in the political and social life of the nation; to rekindle loyalty in the national heart; she had in fact to give her dynasty, never before beloved, and during the reigns of her immediate predecessors infinitely despised, a place in the affections of the people. It would be idle to pretend that any Sovereign of the Hanoverian line was able to call forth that ardent spirit of loyal devotion which with a few exceptions our earlier monarchs, down to the Stuarts, were capable of evoking. The personal demerits of the

first two Princes of that line were not perhaps greater than those of the Stuarts, but apart from the fact that they lacked the qualities and graces which make vice acceptable, they were not our rightful sovereigns; and while the descendants in the male line of those rightful sovereigns remained, loyalty to the Reigning House was perforce of a very feeble and opportunist order. The Jacobite party would have us believe that it is still of an opportunist order, and the contention would be, I think, perfectly logical and justifiable, but for the fact that the Queen by reason of her personal qualities, her devotion to duty, her magnificent services to the Empire, has re-created the monarchical sentiment, and in doing so has really created a new dynasty, as individually and effectually as if that dynasty were in no way connected with Egbert, our first English King.

Assuredly the immediate links which bind the Queen to that ancestor are base enough. George III., whose bigotry lost us America, George IV., whose licentiousness corrupted the nation, so that it was impossible for any man to retain his self-respect and at the same time to retain his respect for his King—William IV., only tolerable because he was many degrees less contemptible than his immediate predecessor, but sufficiently contemptible none the less. Had the conspiracy of the Duke of Cumberland succeeded, and had Ernest Augustus instead of Victoria Alexandrina succeeded to the Throne of

Alfred, there can be little doubt that the newly enfranchised people would have made short work of the monarchy. Britons had had about enough of the Guelphs in the male line, and hailed with delight the prospect of breaking with the traditions of their reign. And break with them they did. The exemplary standard of conduct the Queen insisted upon being observed by her Court, and her devotion to duty, won first the respect of her people and finally their love; although of course, even before the death of the Prince Consort, she passed through periods of acute unpopularity. Perhaps there is nothing more creditable to the Queen as a woman, than the loyal manner in which she has cherished her husband's memory, and assuredly it was a memory worthy to be cherished. The repugnance she feels to what the world calls pleasure was of earlier date than the Prince's death, though this loss increased the feeling. But surely these traits and characteristics showed the Queen to be a woman of deep and correct feelings. It is objected that a Queen cannot allow her private sentiments to rule her conduct; but surely a Queen who had effaced herself so completely that she might conform to the Constitution, may be permitted to indulge her own standard of right and wrong in matters affecting her own personality and her own household. In any case that portion of Her Majesty's subjects whose business in life is pleasure, or to whom catering to pleasure is business, resented the Queen's

choice of a life of seclusion; and these strictures spreading downwards had in the end a damaging effect, resulting in the loyalty of the people growing more and more lukewarm, until the reaction came—and I think I may put the year 1886, when the Queen opened the Colonial Exhibition, as marking the date of that reaction—which has culminated in that intense feeling of loyalty to the Throne existing everywhere to-day. It is a significant fact that the growth of this feeling, this reanimated loyalty to the Throne, synchronises with the growth of the imperial idea. The two are now co-existent and interdependent. It might have been otherwise. The imperial idea might have developed concurrently with the growth of republican sentiments. The Queen's personal qualities have prevented that development. Whatever may happen in the far away future, for the present there can be no doubt that the two sentiments of loyalty to the Throne and to the Empire are so intertwined and intermingled, that one comprises the other, and that one could not be sacrificed without sacrificing the other.

I might, of course, continue this subject indefinitely. Many other causes and influences have contributed to the growth of the imperial idea, but they must be dealt with in the chapters to follow. At the end of the century the Greater Britain Exhibition at Earl's Court must be regarded as following up and, I might almost say, as completing the direct educational benefits of the Colonial Exhibition of 1886.

In spite of everything there still remains a certain small section of the people which cherishes the idea of isolation and dismemberment—the Little Englanders, as they are called to-day. For the moment their voice is hushed. The people of this Empire are engaged in suppressing an insolent revolt against the authority of the Queen in South Africa. Brave and loyal sons of Britain from the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia, the Cape and Natal, have rushed to the standard of Old England, all bent on aiding in a contest which is proving itself to be one of great and, unhappily so far as official England goes, unexpected difficulty. As these difficulties increase, the voice of the Little Englander of the baser sort is heard once more in the land; though silence has fallen upon the men who perceive now that it is too late, that they were powerful enough a few months ago to paralyse the arm of the Government, and that they are really responsible—though the responsibility must be shared by the men who feared to do right lest their actions should be falsely represented—for the lamentable state of unpreparedness to meet our enemies in which the nation finds itself to-day.

CHAPTER III.

GROWTH IN AREA AND POPULATION.

At the end of the 18th century, the area of the British Empire outside these islands was a little over two million square miles, containing a population of something like 100 million souls. Mr. Montgomery Martin's tables show that it had an export trade of 30 millions and an import trade of 25½ millions sterling, of which last trade 24 millions were with this country; that is to say, as between the colonies and the United Kingdom.

When the century had run half its course the area of Greater Britain had increased to 4½ million square miles with a population of 130 millions and a revenue of 31 millions, of which, as Sir John Robinson, ex-Premier of Natal, pertinently remarked in his luminous address on "The Colonies and The Century" before the Royal Colonial Institute (May 9, 1899), India alone contributed 27½ millions.

At the end of the century, and I take Sir Robert Giffen's figures, in that Sir Robert is the greatest authority on the subject, the Empire, including Egypt and the Soudan, contains upwards of 13,-000,000 square miles, with a population of about

420 millions, in other words a fourth of the population of the world. Of this population more than 50,000,000 are of the British race, including, of course, the inhabitants of the parent country. The remainder, according to Sir Robert Giffen, amounts to some 350 to 370 millions, but I seem to find in making the totals and consulting various authorities (I include 30 millions of Africans in Nigeria) that these figures are below rather than above the truth. The greater part of these millions are Asiatics and Africans, and it is of small importance to be precise as to the actual number, since in any case the proportion of the governing race to the subject races is roughly as stated by the eminent statistician already quoted; namely about one to eight throughout the Empire.

It is commonly replied, when our ancestors are blamed for saddling their descendants with an enormous National Debt,—a debt which weighs heavily upon the English people to-day,—that our colonies represent the asset side of the account. The contention has validity. It would be quite as near the truth however, to assert that we might have acquired all our colonies at a fourth, I might perhaps say a tenth, of the actual cost, because by far the greater portion of the expenditure representing our National Debt, was squandered on useless and unproductive campaigns in Europe, which had only a remote tactical or strategical bearing on the conquest of the colonies. That is to say, had we

diverted this money to our navy, and had we contented ourselves with attacking our enemies in their most vulnerable parts, or in other words, their colonies, we might have possessed ourselves of the colonies of Spain, Portugal, France, and Holland in their entirety, at a much less cost in men and treasure than we expended in acquiring a moiety of those colonies. Of course the matter admits of explanation. Professor Seeley says that the wars of the seventeenth century were really wars for the possession of the New World—its territory and its trade. That may be true; but none of the combatants were conscious of the fact, as I think I may have observed already. Great Britain in any case, cared comparatively little for colonies, especially after the loss of America, for did we not relinquish to Spain, France, and Holland, or more properly to France, at the conclusion of the peace of Amiens, nearly everything we had won in the seven years' war? France, which of course stood for Holland as well, was to have Pondicherry, Cochin, Negapatam and the Spice Islands in Asia, the Cape of Good Hope and Senegal in Africa; Martinique, St. Lucia, Guadeloupe, Tobago, Curaçoa, St. Domingo in the West Indies, and St. Pierre and Miquelon in America. France gained other colonies at the expense of Spain and Portugal, and in addition to the other spoils of conquest, we were simple enough to give up to her those important strategic bases in the Mediterranean, Malta, Minorca and Elba. It is

true when accounts with Napoleon, or rather with the birds of prey who gathered about the carcase of his Empire, came to be settled, most of the countries we had so gratuitously surrendered in 1802 were restored to us, and have been held by us ever since, though some of them reverted to us earlier than 1815, the Cape, for instance, to which we returned in 1806.

I mention this circumstance again, this inexplicable surrender to France when surrender was entirely uncalled for, since we were able to hold, and France was powerless to so much as attempt to take, in order to show that although the colonies are the only tangible asset Great Britain can set against the expenditure represented by the National Debt, it is a mistake to suppose we could not have acquired those colonies at an infinitely less cost. Again it is an error to imagine that we owe our colonies entirely to conquest. Sir John Colomb has said—he was writing in 1886—"Our flag has been planted in territories by three distinct processes—conquest, cession, and settlement. . . . Those who think that the Empire means war, need to be reminded that out of eight and a half million square miles of British territory, only about one and a half million square miles have been directly acquired by war or by diplomacy. Some seven million square miles represent the proportion contributed to our Empire by the pursuit of peace. Industrial and Commercial progress has won for us seven-eighths of the

Empire." Now when Sir John Colomb spoke before the United Service Institution some thirteen years ago, many territories which have now been incorporated into the Empire, bringing it up, as we have seen, to a total area of 13 million square miles, had not been added to it. Our position in Egypt, tacitly defined by the Anglo-French Convention of 1899, was then merely a tentative position. The Charter under which Nigeria was practically founded and developed, was only granted in 1886 to the Royal Niger Company, and this Company, when it reached its final limits of political expansion at the beginning of 1899, added half a million acres to the Empire. In South Africa, in addition to smaller increases such as Zululand, that portion of it not taken by the Boers, three quarters of a million square miles were added to the Empire when the country, which now goes by the name of Rhodesia, was annexed, irrespective of British Central Africa, which was proclaimed a protectorate in 1891. In East Africa, Uganda, Witu and Zanzibar have fallen into the lap of the British Empire, and smaller crumbs of territory have been gathered in on the Indian frontier and in China. In point of fact, by one means and the other, the area of the Empire, including of course, territory under British protection, is just half as large again at the end of the century, as it was when Captain Colomb delivered his memorable lecture in 1886. It would be difficult, however, to determine how that authority

would classify these additions. From one point of view almost all this territory has been acquired by conquest, incontestably so in nearly every case, though not as the result of successful conflict with European States. We have dispossessed native potentates, using for that purpose the arts of diplomacy, and when they failed, the arts of war. From another point of view it would be possible to maintain that those territories were won by the pursuits and enterprises of peace, and to owe their existence to the national overflow of population.

I scarcely know to which process we should ascribe the possession of certain of our older colonies, since the process was in many cases a mixed one. Newfoundland, our oldest colony, was claimed by us by right of discovery, but the navigators of other States disputed our claim, and the possession of the country was only confirmed in 1713 when the Treaty of Utrecht put a temporary period on one of those incessant duels with France which were the pastimes of our ancestors. The Windward Islands were acquired in 1605, and the mixed processes of settlement and diplomacy must be held responsible for their acquisition. Bermuda, settled in 1609, may be regarded as peacefully acquired. As to Canada, who shall decide? With the undying story of Wolfe's brilliant victory over Montcalm strong in our memory, and the early conflicts with the Indians scarcely less firmly impressed upon the page of history, we are in some

danger of forgetting those later records of peaceful extension and development, which dispute the claim of the warriors to the honour of adding the Dominion to the imperial domain. The Leeward Islands, Turks and Caicos Isles, the Bahamas, and Gambia, were all peacefully annexed and settled between the years 1623 and 1631. St. Helena was occupied in 1651. Cromwell, who was as truly an Empire-builder as Elizabeth herself, took Jamaica from Spain in 1655. The Gold Coast fell to us in the early years of his successor's reign, and beads and gewgaws, judiciously distributed to native chiefs, played a conspicuous part in its acquisition. We captured Gibraltar from Spain in 1704 and acquired Honduras by treaty in 1783 or thereabouts. Treaties procured for us the sovereignty of the Straits Settlements in 1785. New South Wales and Victoria, our earliest colonies in Australia, date from 1787, and these and all the subsequent developments of our authority in that continent, until we acquired the whole of it, may be regarded as territories gained by peaceful operations, though certain awkward passages with the natives of that country ought to be set against this statement. Sierra Leone was ceded to us in 1795. We took Ceylon from the Dutch in 1795, Trinidad from Spain in 1797, Malta from France in 1800, and British Guiana from Holland in 1803. Tasmania was settled in 1803.

It will be seen then, that we had gained a footing

in most of the countries, and in all the continents in which the colonies are now situated, when the century began; and that the vast extension of the colonial area which has marked the progress of the century, can only be regarded as the natural development of germ-colonies already in existence in 1801. The Cape of Good Hope, finally taken from Holland in 1806 (we paid for it in hard cash in 1815), was merely the nucleus of Cape Colony as it at present exists; which in its turn has been the parent of a far wider dominion, and although settlement aptly describes the method under which this vast area has been occupied, we have to place to the account a long succession of sanguinary wars with Kaffirs, and with the Boers, in estimating the factors which have contributed to its acquisition. The latest of these wars, and by far the most sanguinary, is at the time of writing confined to the Boers, but it is impossible to say what will be its limits, and what will be its results, though its upshot will probably be decided before the century closes. Even that is by no means certain.

Heligoland, which we took from Denmark in 1807, we gave to Germany in 1890. This abandonment of British territory, it may be mentioned parenthetically, with the exception of the cession of the Ionian Isles to Greece in 1864, after being held as a British protectorate for thirty years, and the ever-to-be-regretted Transvaal retrocession of 1880, are the only instances of British retrogression during this century.

We took Mauritius from France in 1810, obtained Ascension by settlement in 1815, and Western Australia, the Falkland Islands and South Australia by like means in 1829, 1833, and 1836, respectively. As to Natal, it would be difficult to say whether that colony fell to us by conquest or settlement. The Boers were first in the field, though we claimed the territory earlier, and the Dutch had to be ejected by forcible means. Still this passage of arms was a very mild affair, thanks to the more spirited manner of dealing with Boer pretensions which then obtained, than had characterised the bearing of the Home Government to the Dutch on several earlier occasions, and until 1899 has characterised generally its bearing to them since. Since then the colonisation of Natal (always excepting events transpiring at this moment) has been on peaceful lines, the brief episode of Langalibalele's rebellion excepted. Aden was ceded to us in 1838. New Zealand can scarcely be regarded as falling under the category of colonies peacefully acquired, seeing that a succession of most sanguinary wars with the Maoris accompanied its occupation. Hong Kong, though China relinquished it by treaty, was really conquered in the first instance; indeed all our subsequent acquisitions in the Celestial Empire may be regarded as conquests, inasmuch as China yielded to the menace of force which she knew she could not resist. The Labuan Islands were acquired by cession from the Sultan of Borneo in 1847. Perim

Island was finally occupied in or about 1856. Lagos, after a somewhat shuttlecock existence, was permanently occupied by Great Britain in 1861, when Docemo, the King, ceded it to this country. The native chiefs of Fiji voluntarily made over this and the neighbouring islands to the Empire in 1874 and in subsequent years. Cyprus came to us in 1878 as the result of a secret deal with Turkey. In 1885--6 we conquered Upper Burmah and extended protectorates over Bechuanaland and Southern New Guinea. As to Bechuanaland, although its final addition to the British Crown was peacefully accomplished, it was necessary to send Sir Charles Warren at the head of an imposing force before the Boer filibusters, who had occupied the country, would give way. It is only necessary to add that Ashanti, after a succession of wars, was finally brought under the control of Great Britain in 1896, when King Prempeh was subdued, and we have passed in rapid survey all the colonies of Great Britain which go to form the British Empire, and indicated the means employed in their acquisition.

It will be seen that in most instances it has been necessary to use force either in the first or subsequent stages of settling nearly all our colonies, in this as in previous centuries; but that, since the conclusion of the last war with France in 1815, force, where employed, has been employed almost exclusively against savage or primitive peoples, or against effete civilisations, Burmah and China, for instance.

In recent years much has been spoken or written on the subjects of our inherent right to dispossess savage peoples of their lands, and I shall have to deal, if space allows, with the influences and tendencies which have accomplished the growth of the Empire in this direction. We are scarcely at the end of these unpleasant necessities, for, although with due forethought and ordinary prudence, and presuming, of course, that certain possible ugly developments in the progress of this South African war do not take place, there ought not to be any further serious trouble with the aboriginal peoples within the pale of the Empire; at all events, for some time to come. The limits of our Empire are almost reached; in many directions they have become absolute and definitive by reason of the partition of almost the entire area of the world among the civilised races of Europe and America. But as touching subject races, of course it is impossible to say what may occur when these peoples have put on the outer crust of civilisation. Mr. Pearson's gloomy forecast is unhappily one that no thinking man, acquainted with this coming problem, can afford to ignore.

One hesitates to make the statement at this moment, since unhappily the continent generally is in high glee at the exhibition of our military ineptitude and War Office incompetence, which the very stubborn campaign in South Africa has discovered to the world; but having regard to the enormous interests at stake. and to the direct influence on war which

the democracy, who have to pay for it with their lives, now exercise on national councils, it would almost appear that the risks of coming into contact with any of our old or new rivals in the field of colonisation, are growing less and less as the world becomes more and more disposed to settle its disputes without resorting to the arbitrament of war. One says it sorrowfully and in bitter humiliation, but after what has occurred so recently, it is not possible to feel as sanguine on this point as formerly. Europe has only to think we are powerless to hold, for her to attempt to take. I believe that the nation is determined to make a clean sweep of its betrayers; the idle ones who have allowed it to drift into this position of danger; but that is a matter I must deal with in a later chapter. Assuming that matters are restored to the *status quo ante bellum,* as every Englishman is bound to assume, and as I for one, rudely as one's confidence has been shaken, still believe; and by this I mean, assuming that England regains her prestige as a power capable of meeting all comers, which obviously presupposes the complete defeat of the Boer Republics and their actual subjection—not merely documentary subjection—to the Empire; then it may be assumed that the work of rounding off the Empire will continue unabated. It is in any case obvious that Portugal cannot much longer retain her feeble hold on what remains to her of that magnificent heritage which the genius of Prince Henry, and a score of mighty captains coming after him,

created and transmitted to their descendants. It may happen, when this estate falls into the market, for it is certain to be a matter of purchase, there may unhappily arise occasions of dispute between the nations which regard themselves as the residuary legatees of that crumbling Empire. There is reason to believe that an arrangement has been come to between two of the most deeply concerned and puissant of these aspirants, and that Germany and England in any case will not come to blows when that inevitable moment arrives, and Portugal finds that it is useless for her to continue to assume the rôle of an imperial power, and that she will best consult her dignity as the pioneer of colonial enterprise by appealing to the record of her magnificent past, and by depriving her detractors of the opportunity of making odious comparisons as to her present.

As to England's nearest neighbour, France, that country has recently added enormously to her colonial possessions; and it is scarcely conceivable, after what occurred in the spring of 1899—the Fashoda incident—that she would venture to put herself in direct antagonism with the British Empire, unless indeed, our present sorry plight should deceive her as to our power, or unless the country should be committed once more to the charge of men so blind to the true interests of the people, as but too many Victorian statesmen proved themselves to be. These misguided statesmen are now gathered

to their fathers. Among the responsible statesmen of both parties in the State who have arrived, or are about to arrive, there are, as has been proved, many who have neglected to do their duty by their country in that they have permitted Englishmen to go to war unprepared with an enemy fully prepared; and to suffer humiliating defeat from a province in revolt, although ordinary forethought and intelligence would have rendered speedy victory a certainty. But it is to be hoped there are none who could so misjudge the temper of the people as to afford its rivals the opportunities with which they were gratuitously presented by the Empire's administrators in the seventies and eighties. If I am right in these conjectures, and if I am right in believing that the nation is about to insist that the splendid resources and power of this Empire shall be speedily organised and made available, so that it may be ready to meet any emergency—for what occurred to us during the last months of 1899 was the fruit of over-confidence and neglect, not of any weakening in our fighting power as a nation—then I do not think France or any other power is likely to give the British Empire an opportunity of repairing past sins and negligences, and of rounding off her territories so as to exclude awkward intrusions of the foreigner in the midst of the various colonial groups, of substituting natural frontiers for artificial ones, thereby relieving certain colonies and settlements of the annoyance of finding themselves *enclaves,* surrounded on all

sides by the settlements of *parvenu* powers—*parvenus*, that is to say, from the colonisation point of view.

It must not be supposed that any colonial or imperial party within the colonies of the British Empire desires that the foolishness of jealous rivals should precipitate a conflict which would afford this opportunity. Better these inconveniences than the deep damnation of war between civilised peoples. But the British Empire would be less than human and more than foolish, if she did not seize this opportunity should it be presented to her. I believe that should any nation or two nations attempt to take advantage of us to-day, when unhappily we are engrossed in a conflict made exceedingly difficult by reason of all those faults and oversights at which I have hinted, and by reason, too, of the seven thousand miles which separate us from our enemy, she or they would still find that they had afforded us the opportunity of which I have spoken. The country has come to understand what is demanded of its wide-world position, and Englishmen would not be sorry if the chance should present itself of being "even," to use an expressive colloquialism, with countries which have treated us with such small consideration in the past, and have taken advantage of our preoccupations elsewhere, and the dilatoriness and supineness of our statesmen, to steal a march on our preserves.

In estimating the chances of the peaceful devel-

opment of our various possessions in the future, especially our Asiatic and African possessions, there is another factor, and a most important one, which must not be lost sight of. I have not referred specifically to our Indian Empire in this chapter, because, so far as the issues under consideration are concerned, it is obvious that India has come to us almost entirely by conquest, and must be held by the same strong sword that won it. India is menaced, let rose-water politicians and sentimental doctrinaires say what they will, by a never-resting and unscrupulous power, which assuredly, so soon as its convenience dictates, will try conclusions with us for its possession. That is a danger we members of the British family here in England, yonder in Canada and Australia, have to recognise. It is one which may come upon us at any moment, and woe betide us if we are found sleeping when it does come. It concerns the honour and greatness of the Empire as a whole, and already its outlying portions are showing their readiness, nay, their eager desire, to lend their aid in strengthening and manning the bulwarks of defence and assisting the Mother Country in repelling the aggressor the moment he begins to put his designs into execution. It may be that a change will overtake Russian policy, and that she will abandon this design, a contingency as likely as that the extreme Irish faction will ever become loyal subjects of the Empire. At present Russia's military and civil rulers cherish the ambition of being

masters of India as strongly as at any time during the century; throughout which they have sedulously and unceasingly pushed their outposts nearer and nearer to our frontiers.

In Africa there is the danger that with the growth and expansion of nascent colonies under the control of various and, in all cases, not too friendly European states; colonies whose boundaries are, in most cases, only defined by hard and fast longitudinal and latitudinal lines, friction may occur, and that this friction may lead to serious results. It may be possible hereafter to minimise these risks by judicious arrangements, readjustments of boundaries, and interchange of territories on the give and take principle, and that under such arrangements a greater measure of homogeneity may be secured for the colonies of the various states, colonies and protectorates, into which the continent is divided. Apart from the misunderstandings and quarrels which may have their origin in the bureaux of European powers, there is the risk, a still greater one perhaps, that colonists themselves will precipitate disputes and foment quarrels with their near neighbours, Europeans under foreign flags; quarrels and disputes which will not admit of being satisfactorily adjusted locally.

In any case, so far as Great Britain in Africa is concerned, she finds herself exposed to all those risks, troubles and dangers arising from the boundaries of her various colonies being co-terminous with those of

colonies under the flag of other powers, which her insular position has spared her in Europe. The endless disputes and wars of Europe have been due in no small measure to this contiguity of boundaries. From these disagreeables Great Britain has hitherto been immune.

Of course the same condition of affairs obtains in the American continent, since the Dominion of Canada and the United States of America are co-terminous. But no one dreams to-day that any kind of mishap will befall the relations of America and Great Britain in consequence of this territorial proximity. Nor need one anticipate as a foregone conclusion, that trouble of this kind must arise in Africa. It is however, a potentiality of the future which it would be folly to ignore. Had there been any system, any forethought, in our progress we might have secured for our colonies in Africa, with the greatest ease, natural instead of artificial frontiers; indeed, as I have said elsewhere, we might, a quarter of a century or so ago, have excluded all rivals from such parts of the continent as we desired to settle and colonise.

A greater risk to the peace of the world, though perhaps it scarcely falls within the scope of this work to discuss it, is discovered in the real or supposed ambition of France to make herself omnipotent along the African Mediterranean littoral. It is thought that she aims at joining her new colony, Tunis, to Algeria by annexing Tripoli, and to com-

plete the coast line by adding Morocco to Algeria. It is held by many students of the trend of political ambition in modern France that the secret policy of her Chauvinists includes, or in any case included, Egypt in the scheme, whereby Italy would be menaced, as well as Great Britain, and if it succeeded, the Mediterranean would be turned into a French lake. I mention this precious scheme merely to dismiss it, for France knows that Europe would not tolerate its exploitation, nor has she under her present system of Government the stability which would favour such enterprises.

It comes then to this, that, apart from contingencies and chances which we can anticipate or foresee, and apart from those which we cannot anticipate or foresee, for I am presuming, as I am bound to presume, and I do so without belittling difficulties, that there is enough grit in old England yet to carry her through this present crisis, and that by the time these words are in print, she will have crushed the conspiracy of froward Africanders once and for all,—the outlook for the British Empire is more settled than at any time during the three centuries of its growth. The era of external advance and expansion will have come almost to an end with the absorption of the Boer Republics. There will be no more worlds to conquer, and very little left to absorb or annex, unless it be China. A chronological coincidence, or accident, I may say, may bring this about at the end of the century; but, irrespective of this

interesting accident, it is plain that the time has arrived when the British Empire must enter upon an era of internal development, and must bend its energies to organising and utilising the territories and their resources of which it finds itself possessed at the beginning of the twentieth century.

It is, of course, no part of my purpose, nor does it fall within the scope of this work to speculate on the possibilities of the future, only so far at least as these possibilities are obvious, and need to be stated as imposing distinct limitations on the value of such progress as has been made. In this chapter I have thought it expedient to set forth some of those limitations which cannot be ignored, if we are to strike anything like an accurate balance between profit and loss. But I must not peer further into that vast vista which opens up to us as we stand on the threshold of the new century. I have endeavoured to show how we became possessed of this boundless domain which is now the portion of the British section of the Anglo-Saxon race. It now behoves me to trace in broad outlines the details of its growth.

CHAPTER IV.

A CENTURY'S COLONISATION AND EMIGRATION.

THE attempt, were I so foolish as to venture upon it, to determine as to how far the prosperity of the Mother Country has influenced emigration from it, and how far it has been influenced by a cause precisely opposite, in other words, by distress at home, would encroach far too seriously on my space; it would in fact consume the whole of it. Nevertheless, paradoxical as it may seem to say so, emigration has not always been the outcome of straitened circumstances at home. The phenomenal emigration of the Irish to America may be, it is true, attributed almost entirely to this cause, although a great deal of nonsense has been talked with the object of showing that the Irish left their home to escape the oppression of the Saxon; nonsense, I say, because the truth bound up in the statement is obscured by the grossly exaggerated manner of its presentation. Saxons were not answerable for the potato famine, and they did their best to mitigate its consequences. On the other hand certain movements of the people, notably such settlements as Rhodesia by gentlemen adventurers, and these not younger sons only, may be looked upon as the out-

growth of prosperous circumstances; to have resulted in fact from an overflow of capital and the natural desire to earn for it a greater return than was possible at home. There I must leave the issue I have raised. It is obviously too full of complications, contradictions and undercurrents to be pursued in detail.

Until 1819 it cannot be said that emigration, as a means of relieving distress at home, was seriously entertained in this country. The idea was mooted earlier, but it was not acted upon until that year. It may perhaps be said that since the successful effort to colonise the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope in 1820, the Government of Great Britain has looked with a favourable eye upon emigration; though on the whole it has been sadly wanting in its duties in this matter; rarely going beyond a benevolent and altogether academic patronage of the movement. America (the United States) has, of course, always claimed the greater number of persons leaving these islands in search of better opportunities in life.

The emigration from the United Kingdom in 1815 scarcely exceeded 2,000 souls. In 1820, the year of the famous Port Elizabeth settlement, the number of emigrants had risen to nearly 26,000. In 1830 this total was more than doubled, and nearly doubled again in 1840, when the figures were 90,743, figures more than trebled in 1850, when they stood at 280,843. They were higher still in

1854, after which time they fluctuated violently, and are rendered confusing by reason of the large number of foreigners passing through Britain on their way to America and to Canada and the other colonies. These foreigners were included in the totals. It is stated however, that between 1815 and 1880, inclusive, nine and a quarter million emigrants left the United Kingdom, of whom over six millions went to the United States, and a number falling slightly short of three millions to the British colonies. It is, of course, with these last that we are mainly concerned, although it is interesting to note in passing, the enormous gain it would have been to the Empire if an effort had been made to attract those six million American immigrants to the shores of our own colonies, an effort which, so far as I can learn, was scarcely so much as attempted theoretically, much less practically.

Some years ago I verified some ingenious calculations, though I cannot now remember to whom I was indebted for them, probably to the late Mr. de Labillière, which went to show how enormously we had lost, as an Empire, by allowing our countrymen to drift to the United States instead of to our own colonies. Taking the fifty years during which four millions of English folk had settled in Republican America, and assuming that at the expiration of these fifty years these four millions were represented by three million adult males, the gain to America is represented in money by the sum of

£525,000,000 annually, seeing that the average yearly production of every adult American is £175. The total, that is to say, the £525,000,000, contributes 7 per cent. to the national revenue, or in other words, £36,000,000 annually. Now all this wealth has gone to the United States, because America offers a double free market; that of the States themselves and that of England. Had England rendered her colonies immune from import duties, and judiciously taxed the produce of foreign nations, she might have retained most of this wealth, and the greater part of the people creating it, within the confines of her own Empire. Obviously, however, this argument is not to be taken too seriously. The British Empire across seas was not ready for the reception of this enormous influx of people; and the conclusions drawn above are not to be accepted without considerable reserve. Moreover, it is happily no longer profitable, save as an object lesson in how not to manage an empire, which may prepare the way for fundamental and wiser courses in the future, to dwell upon this lamentable instance of national ineptitude. Indeed the political ineptitude of the British people, especially the inhabitants of the British Isles, on all large matters of national concern has been so persistent and so colossal, that had we our deserts, we should be shorn of Empire altogether. As one studies minutely the annals of the century, our crass stupidity in managing our imperial estates, and the marvellous way we have con-

tinued and prospered in spite of it all, almost compels one to accept the chosen-people doctrine. Surely a Providence has shaped our ends, rough hewn them to our own disadvantage though we have. To-day, it seems to me, that the future of the British Empire is bound up increasingly with the future of that other vast section of the English race, a section which the late Professor Freeman, taking his stand somewhat pedantically on the precedent of ancient Greece and her colonies, always maintained was a part of Greater Britain—the United States of America.

If this be so, it is not merely because blood is thicker than water, but because a common language and a common literature, inculcating the same ideals and models of life and conduct, are thicker than blood. For the moment I must let this alluring "proposition" pass. But it is something more than a mere academic proposition. It is based on substantial facts. It will have a distinct bearing, and as I hope and believe, bearing for good on the development of the world in the coming centuries. It is enough for my immediate purposes to say, that it is not necessary for me to draw an arbitrary line between the colonisation and progress of Republican America, and the colonisation and progress of the rest of the Anglo-Saxon world, because for me the progress of the British Empire would have absolutely no interest; I should regard it in no sense as beneficent or healthful, did I not believe that it is

a link in the chain of that universal federation of the races of the earth, which must inevitably follow upon the alliance of all Anglo-Saxondom. Anglo-Saxondom could not love its own desires and aspirations so much, loved it not humanity more. United Anglo-Saxondom will be in a position to enforce the abstract ideas of justice, peace and humanity, and to compel the rest of the world to accept them. The progress of the British Empire during the century has been stupendous, magnificent, what you will; but in nothing has its progress been so salutary, so real and so enduring, as in its progress toward the ideal of using its might to ensure for the whole world a common government, if not a common brotherhood. Against that, if it is held to mean the fusion of the black and white races, nature has set its eternal decree.

From this altitude, the realm of dreams I may be told, it is necessary to descend to hard and dry facts; the statistics of the displacement during the century (would that that displacement had been greater) of a certain section of the people of these over-populated islands. The figures already given show the general trend of emigration during the first half of the century. The North American colonies have appealed in a peculiarly erratic manner to persons wishing to emigrate. In 1842, 54,123 immigrants arrived in those colonies; in 1847, 109,680. During the fifties, sixties and seventies, Canada appears, so far as I pretend to understand the absolutely con-

tradictory statistics given by different authorities, to have received a very slight accession in the number of its population from outside. The tables prepared by the Minister of Agriculture, discriminate so far as possible between immigrants who intended to settle in the Dominion, and those whose objective was the United States. In 1882 the numbers had risen to 112,458 and in 1883 stood at 133,624. Of course the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which was begun in 1881, attracted a great many settlers; especially as the Dominion Government offered liberal grants to *bona fide* colonists. Canada, by reason of the enormous extent of her area, particularly since the opening up of the North-West Territories, has been able and willing to offer very liberal inducements to European settlers; though it cannot be said that these inducements have attracted anything like the population which one might have expected from their intrinsic advantages, and from the lavish way in which the offer and its advantages have been made known throughout the United Kingdom. A free gift of 160 acres is no inconsiderable one, and it is certain that men who have had the good sense to accept it, and the pluck and resource to utilise it, have accepted what has proved to be the nucleus of a comfortable competence, and often of fortune.

The discovery of gold in British Columbia and the rush to Klondyke and Yukon have, of course, materially added to the number of newcomers; and

no doubt Canada is on the eve of very great developments. But some idea may be formed of the comparatively small number of persons settling in Canada during the thirty years or so between 1850 and 1881, by studying the census of the last of those years. Of every 1,000 persons then inhabiting the Dominion, 11 were born in the British Isles and possessions, 2 in the United States and 1 in other foreign countries, the remainder being natives of Canada. In 1898 the population amounted to 5¼ millions, of which colonists of French origin numbered 1,415,000, or 29.4 per cent. This was about the percentage of the French in 1881, so that it is clear that colonists of French origin increase more rapidly than the English colonists, who have in recent years received substantial additions from without. It is abundantly plain from these figures—at the end of the century Canada has about 5½ million inhabitants—that the Dominion with its vast territory is still in its infancy. The area of Canada is larger than that of the United States, comprising 3,610,207 square miles, or ten times the area of what was called Canada before the Confederation of 1867.

Although the Dominion has not as yet fulfilled the expectations of many of its citizens, and of numerous philanthropic and public-spirited men of the United Kingdom (the names of Lord Meath, Miss Rye, Dr. Barnardo and Walter Hazell leap to the mind), that it should become the principal receiving house, so to speak, for our crowded-out

peoples, many efforts to this end have been made, though in a tentative and somewhat erratic manner. It is true there was once a department at the Colonial Office—it existed for about thirty years between 1840 and 1871—which superintended more or less directly the departure from this country, if the late Lord Carnarvon's figures were correct, though I can scarcely think they were, of between six and seven millions of emigrants. But during all these years, nothing was done by Parliament to assist emigration by grants in aid, so far as the application of the principle of emigration as a steady system was concerned.

During the Irish famine and other exceptional crises, aid was given. Also when the Irish Land Bill was passed in 1881 the Government was empowered to raise £200,000 for emigration. The day when our colonies interested themselves pecuniarily or otherwise in immigration is long since passed. A short-sighted system of land alienation has blighted the fair prospects of all our colonies. The Home Government in granting representative institutions, and finally complete autonomy to the colonies, handed over to them respectively, unreservedly and unconditionally, the lands belonging to the Crown; thus robbing the people of these islands of the fruits of the sacrifices made by themselves, or in any case by their immediate and remoter ancestors, in winning these colonies, and of the only tangible asset to set against the twenty millions or

so which the inhabitants of these islands have to pay, interest on the National Debt, of which debt the colonies are the sole visible acknowledgment. English statesmen were no more magnanimous in adopting this course than they were in bestowing complete autonomy on the colonies, without taking the precaution to protect the home country against the imposition of duties on their products, by inserting binding clauses to that end in the constitutions granted. Since we had already adopted free trade ourselves, we should at least have bargained for differential treatment on the part of our colonies. However this may be, it was, I think, a great political blunder, and an injustice to allow the colonies to take undivided possession of a heritage, the Crown Lands, in which the children of the Motherland had unexhausted rights. But in adopting this course as in that other course, the British Governments responsible, were not guilty of anything so amiable as magnanimity; their action was due partly to gross carelessness and lack of imagination; but more still to a premeditated intention on the part of most of the statesmen concerned, to prepare the way for that complete severance from the Mother Country which it was their aim to force upon the colonies.

This ineptitude has had disastrous consequences. It has checked the growth of the Empire. It has put it into the power of small and retrograde bodies of men—selfish land monopolists, and equally selfish labourers, who wished to keep up the price of labour

by excluding competitors—to shut the door in the face of fresh immigrants. This has been especially the case in the Australian group.

It was necessary to say this much to explain why colonisation on a scientific basis, and immigration on the simple footing of supply and demand, have received comparatively little stimulus from the various great groups of colonies, Canada excepted; for Canada being a pastoral and agricultural country with an enormous area of land awaiting development, has not incurred the reproach, to anything like the same extent, as Australasia and the Cape have. It is rather amusing to read in certain semi-official statements put forth by the colonies of New South Wales and Victoria, that owing to the prosperous condition of these colonies, no state assistance is now given to immigrants. And yet in Victoria, at all events, one class of immigrant is surely needed, seeing that although the disparity between the male and female population is gradually righting itself—in 1871, out of a population of 731,528 souls, there were 401,000 males to 330,000 females, and in 1881, out of a total of 862,346, the males were 452,000 to 410,000 females—it still exists. Moreover, despite the fact that the greater part of central Australia is a hopeless desert, yet it may be said of the Australasian colonists generally, that they have scarcely touched the fringe of the vast continent which it is their manifest destiny to exploit; and although it is true that Australia pos-

sesses all the elements of a self-sustaining population, it would be none the worse for a constant infiltration of new blood from Europe. Certainly there is no reason to suppose that Australia is in the position of the greater part of republican America, which careful examination of data and statistics proves to be incapable of continuing, unless its peoples are constantly reinforced from Europe. Families which receive no fresh blood from Europe become sterile.

Meanwhile, to prevent misunderstanding, I ought to say here that Australia, despite local discouragement, receives a large, but fluctuating increase from Great Britain. Some of the younger colonies still encourage immigrants from Europe; but whether at the moment Queensland continues to do so, I am not quite sure. In any case Queensland has expended three or four millions on this object since its detachment from New South Wales in 1859. Its population has rapidly increased. In 1886 it exceeded 325,000 souls, or thirteen times the number of its inhabitants at the date of its foundation. At the end of the century its population amounts to about half a million. At the moment, owing mainly to the progress made in the gold industry, Western Australia is the most progressive portion of the continent; the other colonies having scarcely recovered from the financial collapse of the early years of the last decade of the century.

Western Australia in common with New South

Wales, Queensland and Tasmania, directly, and with Victoria indirectly, owed its start in life to convict labour. It is true its earliest settlement in 1829–30 was due to an act of unwonted generosity on the part of the Home Government in offering liberal grants of land to settlers. It is a significant fact, that the lack of capital and organisation made these grants comparatively useless, a condition of affairs with which the student of early settlements under the free land grant system is unpleasantly familiar. It is still more significant that after about a dozen years of hard struggle against difficulties created by the lack of labour and lack of markets; the colonists actually petitioned the Imperial Government to make the colony a penal settlement and for about twenty years shiploads of convicts, amounting in all to two thousand prisoners, were sent into this part of the Australian continent. When the Imperial Government is blamed for contaminating colonies with convict-labour, it is only just to remember this circumstance. It is true that this action on the part of the West Australians was greatly at variance with the attitude of Australian colonists generally, and with that of Cape colonists. At the Cape the Anti-Convict Association was formed in 1847 on the report that the Home Government intended to make the Cape a penal settlement; and the determined colonists succeeded in boycotting the "Neptune," which arrived in Simon's Bay in that year. This was about the time, or a little

earlier, that Western Australia was begging for convict labour. As to this Cape trouble, in order to save the convicts, and the officials in charge of them, from starvation, the Anti-Convict Association removed its embargo on the vessel; but they had carried their day, and a promise was extracted that the immigrants the Home Government wished to add to the population of the colony, should be taken back again. This promise was fulfilled. After all, as is so often the case, this fight, excellent as the Cape's position was in principle, was really a storm in a teacup. The convicts shipped on the "Neptune" were criminals only in the political sense, and they were to be utilised in the imperial work of building a breakwater at Table Bay.

As to Western Australia, convict labour was not sent there after 1868. The prosperity of that colony dates from the assumption by Sir Frederick Napier Broome of the government. This was in 1870. About ten years later, Sir Frederick is found declaring Western Australia to be one of the few remaining parts of the British Empire in which, possessing ample territory and varied resources, there was an almost boundless scope for enterprise and settlement. Certainly Western Australia has a splendid climate and magnificent resources, and, as I have already said, its progress in recent years has been altogether remarkable. At the present moment its population may be a little over, or fall slightly under 200,000 souls. In 1884 it scarcely amounted to 33,000.

The foundation of Southern Australia is interesting in that it owes its existence to a private colonisation society founded on the principles laid down by Edward Gibbon Wakefield. The Wakefield system substituted the free granting of land for sales of land at prices regulated by the immediate circumstances. When the sale was effected, the money resulting was to be applied to assist suitable immigrants into the country, and in opening it up by public works, roads, canals, bridges, harbours and so forth. An excellent scheme, but not offering sufficient stimulus to the go-ahead sections of the British race, whose leading idea unfortunately is ever for personal aggrandisement, each man hoping to get a huge economic advantage over his fellow, and to compel his neighbour's labour for his own benefit. Socialistic, State socialistic colonisation, on the Wakefield lines, is worthy of all commendation on principle; but it has not been largely adopted. Nevertheless, the stagnation resulting from dumping down settlers in Western Australia without labourers and without capital, may be regarded as the determining factor which decided the South Australian experiment. The South Australian Company was formed in 1834; but it was practically a Government affair. The actual terms under which the Board of Commissioners worked are worth recording. So careful was the niggardly Imperial Government to protect itself against any possible loss, the act of settlement was not to become operative

until £35,000 had been actually realised by the sale of land, of which £20,000 was to be raised by bonds to be invested in the British Funds, and to be held as a mortgage against any loss by the Government.

It is no good blinking the fact that this experiment, and despite the mean way in which it was hedged in by the Home Government, it was a most laudable one, and formed on sound principles, did not succeed. It began well, but the first two Governors were unable to rise to the conception of the idea animating it; and had neither the ability, tact, nor patience to carry it out. The second Governor, Captain Gawler, expended money on public works for which he had received no sanction from the Home Government; and he entirely vitiated the scheme in its very essence, by herding the colonists together in Adelaide, instead of spreading them over the country districts.

It needed a man possessing the genius of administration to put matters straight. Happily the hour produced the deliverer—George Grey, perhaps the most sane, capable, and—despite the cruel manner in which, as I have already shown, he was, on subsequent occasions, checkmated by Downing Street—the most successful pro-consul the British Empire has known during the century. Sir George Grey pulled the young country out of the slough of insolvency; and set about providing it with means of communication. His good work, covering five years or so, was continued by his successor; and to-day the colony consists of nearly a million square miles, for

the addition of the Northern Territory in 1863 nearly trebled its area. With a population which is probably nearer 400,000 than 300,000 souls, Southern Australia is by no means the least important or prosperous portion of Her Majesty's domains.

New Zealand owes its origin as a British colony to the same germ, the enterprise of a private colonisation and land company, as South Australia. Lord Durham, who showed himself so keenly alive to the value of colonies during his tenure of the Governorship of Canada, placed himself, in the first years of the Queen's reign, at the head of a body called the New Zealand Land Company. This was in or about 1839. This company employed agents with large funds at their disposal, to purchase land from the natives; and here it may be noted that the settlement of New Zealand, apart from the inevitable war and confiscation consequent upon the bad faith and insurrection of native chiefs who had made over their private or sovereign rights to Great Britain, was accomplished by purchase, and not by conquest. The Home Government disliking, as every home government of the first three-quarters of the century did dislike, anything tending to increase the extra-insular responsibilities of the Kingdom, tried strenuously to nip this young colony in the bud; but in the end the force of circumstances was too strong for them, and in 1840 they sent out a consul, Captain Hobson, with instructions to do what was needful. Captain Hobson found that the

settlers, to use a current expression which is sanctioned by its strict applicability, had been "going it strong." They had acquired a great deal of land in the North and South Islands, and had established a centre at Wellington; but they had made it convenient to forget that they were subjects of the Queen, and that they were dealing with land under the implied sovereignty of Her Majesty, if that sovereignty had not then been technically proclaimed. It is impossible to censure this conduct severely, considering what sort of support and encouragement British colonists had been taught to expect from the Colonial Office; but it is fortunate that Consul Hobson had a proleptic eye, and that having such vision, he promptly nipped this nebulous republicanism, to use Mr. Rhodes' term, in the bud—a nebulous republicanism which, showing itself about the same time in another land, was allowed to go unchecked, and has worked in consequence prodigious mischief.

In June, 1840, the settlement—by this time the Maoris had formally acknowledged the supremacy of the Queen of England—was elevated into a colony under a charter. The New Zealand Company did not relinquish its prerogatives, actual, or as it seemed to them, actual or implied, without a struggle. Sir George Grey, promoted from South Australia, arrived in 1845, and worked wonders for the nascent colony; while it must be accounted to the credit of another stalwart among the emancipated,

and gaol accommodation necessary for the control and reception of these convicts. An almost incredible story, but unhappily too true. Notwithstanding this outrage, for outrage it was, Tasmania has survived and obliterated, as all the Australian colonies have, the taint of convict blood. The better elements have absorbed or pushed to the wall these—for the most part, though by no means invariably—undesirable human factors, and Tasmania to-day is an orderly, prosperous and contented community of some 200,000 souls.

The Fiji Islands, like many other countries ruled over by savages, were repeatedly offered by their lawful chiefs to the English Crown; but until 1874 these offers were steadily declined. The dilatory conduct of Downing Street, and its evident disinclination to meet the wishes of the Australian colonies in the matter of New Guinea, led at last to Queensland taking the initiative, and annexing the island on its own responsibility. This raised the curious question as to whether a colony was justified in extending the Queen's dominions in its own waters, so to speak, without the direct sanction of Her Majesty's Government. The question was, of course, very properly decided in the negative; for the recognition of such a right on the part of colonies, would have committed the Home Government far too seriously; it would, in fact, have given the colonies the attributes of entirely independent states, and could not but have had a disastrous effect in weakening the imperial idea.

Nevertheless the irritating indifference of Great Britain to the vital interests and dearest wishes of colonists, and to the wider interests of the Empire, must be held to be sufficient excuse for the course pursued by Queensland. As Sir Graham Berry forcibly pointed out in addressing the Royal Colonial Institute some years ago, it is of supreme importance to a growing power like Australia, that the Empire should acquire the islands which surround her, seeing that the intrusion of European powers with navies into the waters of the Pacific, brings disturbing political elements and potential dangers to her door; while the use some of these powers, France for instance, make of these islands—stations for imperfectly guarded criminals of the most desperate character—constitutes an ever-present menace to her social well-being.

The history of the British Empire is one long record of the persistent neglect, and contemptuous dismissal on the part of the Home Government of the counsels of responsible persons in the colonies. The elected representatives of the colonists, and more often still, the accredited agents of Great Britain, have tendered the sagest advice to Downing Street, based on knowledge and experience, only to find that their warnings and pleadings fell on deaf ears. Thus the procrastination of the Home Government led, in the case just referred to, to the intrusion of Germany into the island. The more the pity. The same thing happened, as I have already

remarked, and I personally can claim to have been among the pleaders and monitors, in Africa. Germany snapped up Damaraland under our very noses, though Prince Bismarck deliberately said he would respect our claim to it, if seriously put forward. If one of the political dreams of my life, Anglo-German alliance, should fall foul of accomplishment, we may have to pay bitterly for these criminal negligences in the future.

As to New Guinea and the other islands of the Western Pacific, although they show considerable promise as settlements, they are not likely, at all events while territory so much better fitted for British colonisation is practically unexploited, to become colonies in the true sense. That they have considerable intrinsic as well as strategical value, Lord Stanmore, and other Government servants who have been called upon to administer them, have again and again testified. Neither, perhaps, are North Borneo and the settlements of the Asiatic Archipelago of great value in themselves. In fact all our Indian and Asian possessions, the islands in the Indian Ocean, the Gulf of Aden, in the Southern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the West Indies, must, with the possible exception of Mauritius, be looked upon as dependencies, held for humane, commercial or strategic purposes, but not destined in any large degree to be peopled by the English race.

Nor is it to be supposed that at any time East Africa or West Africa can support a large British

or, for that matter, European population. British colonisation and emigration during the century, has been mainly directed to North America, Australasia and South Africa, and this is likely to continue to be the case. These three great divisions of the Empire, if we exclude India, the greatest and most important divisions into which it falls, afford the people of our race, scope for development as permanent hereditary settlers. It is not possible to rear families successfully in India, scarcely possible in the West Indies; while it may be doubted whether any part of equatorial Africa will be found suitable for colonisation in the true sense of the word.

The case of South Africa is different. So far as I can pretend to the gift of prophecy, I would say of Africa, especially the sub-continent, the sub-tropical area, that it is to the Victorian era and thereafter, what America was to the Elizabethan era and thereafter. Further, I regard South Africa as the key of the Empire. I shall enter more fully into the story of its development than the scope of this work permits me, in the case of the sister colonies. Africa supplies the very best example of State-colonisation of the century; while the development and progress of Rhodesia is perhaps the most interesting page of colonial history written during the century. For obvious reasons I delay this page until the latest moment of sending this work to press.

CHAPTER V.

THE CENTURY'S PROGRESS TOWARDS IMPERIAL UNITY.

I THINK one is justified in the assumption that all this expansion of our race, this marvellous extension of our dominion, has no attractions for the thinkers among us merely because it adds glory to our flag and prestige to our history; nor do the serious-minded value our progress as affording us an opportunity to look down upon the nations of the earth as superiors in strength and renown. We value these advantages because we mean to use this strength and renown for the ultimate benefit of the whole world. It is to be hoped we are sincere in this intention; it is to be hoped that it is not a presumptuous one. In any case, if this is not our hope and our intention, then the titles and insignia blazoned upon our banner, are but the marks of the beast; and our progress is a thing condemned and accursed.

It is impossible in this not to sympathise with the noble sentiments, noble though complicated by tiresome pedantry, and loudly-advertised scholarship, of the late Professor Freeman. But Freeman, led away by the intellectual pride which caused him to labour the comparison he sought to draw between the colonies of Greece and those of Great Britain,

wearied his audience with conclusions and deductions which were in no sense applicable to hard and fast, work-a-day facts now confronting practical statesmen.

The Empire which has absorbed whole continents, taking in as subjects numerous Europeans not of English origin, as the French in Canada, and the Dutch in South Africa; dominating vast aboriginal peoples, the Hindoos and Mussulmans of India, the Red men of Canada, the Kaffirs and Negroes of Africa, the Maoris of New Zealand, is, by its very constitution, on a different plane from the colonial commonwealth of Greece. The friendship between Corinth and Syracuse, between Greek metropolis and Greek colony, may or may not have been nobler, all things thrown into the balance, I am not sure that it was, than the friendship between London and Montreal, London and Melbourne, London and Cape Town; but as the union was different in its constitution, so was it feebler in its capacity for endurance. The tie did not insure permanence to the Greek Commonwealth, or to anything Greek, save its literature and its art, the best parts of Greece, I allow; but we are dealing now with political forces, and not with forces which, operative over the minds of the cultured few, are cosmopolitan and non-national in their character. As political forces, the language and institutions of Greece are dead. The very race has disappeared from the face of the earth. Mr. Freeman tells us in effect that the tie between

mother and daughter, here in the British Empire, is of coarser texture than the tie which bound the Greek Republic together. But it is plain that it was not so much the actual tie which displeased him in regard to the British Empire, as the name. And assuredly the Commonwealth of English peoples would be a far more appropriate name for a confederacy of England and her colonies, than a title in which the word Empire, or any inflexion thereof, appears. The term Imperial does somewhat justly describe, even on pedantic grounds, the present relationship between Great Britain and the colonies, since the latter are now exposed to the risk of being involved in wars in the making of which they have had no voice. There is a certain inconsistency in using the term Imperial Federation for a change in our constitution which should relieve the colonies of this uncomfortable state of affairs. But this end may be gained without founding, as Mr. Freeman wished to see founded, the United States of Australasia, the United States of South Africa, and so forth, apart from and independent of the Kingdom of Great Britain. The affiliation of the colonies under the Crown of Britain in some form of close alliance, is a consummation devoutly to be wished; and I confess that years ago I set forth in a review the opinion that a permanent alliance, offensive and defensive, between Great and Greater Britain, might possibly prove to be a more feasible solution of the unity problem than a hard and fast confederacy. But

neither solution is likely to be brought about so speedily or effectually by first severing the tie between England and her colonies, as by drawing it closer. In any case, a permanent alliance between America and Greater Britain, will be rendered easier, more possible in every way, when the political bonds between Great Britain, Canada, Australasia and South Africa are clearly established and defined. Why Mr. Freeman and his school should set up the Greek model as exemplary, it is difficult to comprehend, seeing that with all its virtues the Greek system had not the virtue of permanence, nor could such a system ever possess the elements of permanence. Mr. Freeman himself emphasises the vast differences in the processes of Greek and European colonisation; and having admitted them, somewhat inconsistently deplores the fact that the development of the British Empire has not followed the lines of the development of the Greek colonies.

The growth of the British Empire, from its small beginnings in Kent and Sussex until to-day, has been uncertain, wayward, and seemingly accidental. It has been a long series of making and unmaking, pulling up and replanting, patching and mending, adopting means to ends as the necessities became urgent; but never, either so far as the development of its constitution or the continuity of its policy goes, has there been any sort of consistent or uniform growth. Every attempt to round off our institutions so as to make them accord with theories, beautiful academ-

ically as models, but insusceptible of adaptation to the varying, contradictory, and elastic necessities of the composite peoples inhabiting the British Empire, has proved abortive. Imperial Federationists long ago recognised that their efforts must stop short at teaching the necessity of preserving the essential unity of the Empire, and helping every influence or movement which tended in that direction, and that the attempt to force the pace, anticipate, that is to say, national processes, would inevitably retard those processes, and might possibly have the effect of bringing the cause itself to ruin. A federal union which would, for instance—I am speaking, of course, of the days before the war—take in the independent Orange Free State, and the quasi-independent South African Republic—would require for its accomplishment, a great deal of tact, compromise, and the departure from any cut-and-dried scheme or pre-arranged system wherein the component parts of the Empire took their places according to an arithmetical and precise formula; while any alliance, however loosely framed, which embraced the whole of Anglo-Saxondom, would have to come about by gradual processes, as I believe it is coming about. Neither the unity of the British Empire, nor the unity of Anglo-Saxondom can be arranged on lines which would give to the structure that symmetry and homogeneity of which the makers of paper constitutions dream: those impatient doctrinaires who vainly imagine a fond thing when they conceive that the

peoples of the Anglo-Saxon race will ever consent, save in a case of dire emergency, to a drastic and radical change in their respective constitutions. So far as Great and Greater Britain are concerned, by slow evolution the change will be effected, so as to transform our sectional Imperial Parliament into an assembly to which the colonies will send representatives. Nor will the transformation mean that Great Britain will cease to rule in her own home: as Mr. Freeman supposed. It will surely come about, despite the banter and enmity of such men as Freeman in England, Goldwin Smith in Canada, J. X. Merriman in South Africa; men who have to the full the vices of their virtues: the besetting sin of the academic mind which persists in viewing the future solely as a reflex of the past, forgetful of Hamlet's sage admonition to Horatio.

The entrance of France and Germany into the ranks of colonial powers, to be exact I should say the re-entrance of France, has—and this should be apparent to the dullest wit—rendered the essential conservation of the British Empire a national necessity, not only for the metropolis of that Empire, but for each of its provinces, unless indeed England would regard complacently the absorption of those provinces by one or the other of these powers. The still less foreseen departure of the United States of America from the policy Washington imposed upon the nation he founded—a policy which obliged her to remain stationary as to territory, within the bound-

aries of the North American continent; her assumption, that is to say, of imperial responsibilities in Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippine Islands—proves conclusively, that since the discovery of the New World, empire-making has imposed itself as a necessity upon all virile and progressive peoples. Great Britain has hitherto been the most successful empire-maker: because she has been the most virile nationality. The converse, not to push instances further, is proved by the case of Spain and Portugal; in fact at the moment it would ill-become me to push instances further. So long as Spain and Portugal were virile, they possessed powerful colonies; the decay and loss of which have been coincident with the decline of the Kingdoms of the Peninsula.

The growth in the imperial sentiments of the British race in the United Kingdom and in the colonies, has been so marked during recent years, that it has practically converted, or at least silenced, most of the so-called Little Englanders at home, and the Republicans and Separatists in the colonies. This growth has been due not merely to the national and inherent forces from within making for imperial unity, but from the reluctant admission of all but the most prejudiced and stubborn of its opponents, that we live in an era of imperial expansion, when, as I have said, all the growing races are seeking to extend the area of their boundaries, and the scope of their influence. It is tardily recognised that for us who, if not the pioneers of imperial colonisation,

have for a century been its advance guard; to turn our back on our work would not only be to abdicate our position as the leaders of the progress and civilisation of the world, but it would be a symptom of approaching decrepitude and senility too unmistakeable to admit of a doubt of the doom awaiting us. Sir Robert Giffen is among those thinkers who had no natural love or enthusiasm for Empire. He admits that if he had a free choice, he would have deprecated the acquisition of our own Empire. But he adds pertinently: "We are in for this great Empire; and there is an end to the matter. Even if we dislike it, we must make the best of our position."

Of course it was easy for so skilful a writer as Professor Freeman, to cast ridicule on imperial federation, and imperial federationists. Let it be allowed that the term—imperial federation—is indefensible from the pedant's point of view. The scheme itself, if taken in the precise and old-maidish way in which Professor Freeman insisted on taking it, is no less indefensible. For the sake of consistency to a phrase, no sane federal unionist could dream of advocating the admission of the Indian peoples into the Imperial Parliament. The tenure of India rests on conquest; so of course did our tenure of Canada; and so will our tenure of South Africa, when we have reconquered it. But the inhabitants of India were never a self-governing people; nor were the aborigines of Africa. In

India and in Africa it should be obvious that the only people who would have any claim to admission into an Imperial Assembly, would be men of European race belonging to the governing classes. The fact that British South Africa, a considerable part of it, has committed the egregious error of giving the suffrage to natives under certain conditions—far too easy conditions, be it said, even were the principle itself capable of being defended—cannot be cited as a reason why the whole nation, the Empire, that is to say, should repeat the error of certain of her colonial offspring. It is of course, undeniable that difficulties of principle have to be surmounted before any scheme of imperial unity can be carried into effect; but these difficulties are not insuperable. The physical difficulties in the way of union have been entirely removed by the scientific progress of the century which has obliterated space: telegraphic communication and steam locomotion. Physical difficulties do not stand in the way of the admission of colonial representatives to the English House of Commons; nor do moral difficulties, seeing that England has for a century meekly endured that it should be in the power of the Irish members to control, or in any case hamper her internal affairs, and in a large measure her foreign affairs, and this, too, at critical junctures in her history. This being so, she need scarcely fear the addition of what at first would be a mere handful of colonists to the Assembly at Westminster.

I am not however, called upon to deal here with the intricacies of this question, so far as its future is concerned; but it is incumbent upon me to record what actual progress in fact, and progress in the acceptance of the principle of federation, has been registered at the end of the century. I must however, guard against being misunderstood in what I have written. During the last two decades I have dealt with the question of federal union in scores of lectures and articles; and at no time have I failed to point out that federation must be associated with decentralisation, and that no mere haphazard scheme of pitchforking a few delegates into the British Parliament, would meet the ultimate requirements of the case; though it might serve as a temporary measure.

It may be said at once then, that the objections of such men as Professor Freeman, based as they were on purely academic grounds, have had no weight with the people of Great and Greater Britain, who, once having grasped the idea that imperial unity is a necessity of national existence and well-being, are not likely to trouble themselves unduly because in giving effect to this idea, some sacrifices on both sides will have to be made, and great difficulties, as to ways and means, will have to be surmounted. The various suggestions which have passed under my notice for effecting this end, are one and all—and their name is legion—open to criticism and objection. It may be, as I have before hinted, that existing institutions at home and in the

colonies will remain unaltered, and that the representation of the colonies will be effected by increasing the powers (when the various colonial groups are interfederated among themselves) of the high representative of each group, or in other words by giving their representatives seats in the Cabinet. This form of representation I confess seems to me to be the most feasible of any form: at all events so far as present necessities go. I take it that the Australian colonies, when they finally become welded into a Dominion, as Canada has been welded, will be represented by a functionary for the entire group, an office which would rank with that of the High Commissionership of the Dominion. I refuse to contemplate any other ultimate issue for the South African colonies and states than a similar union; and the South African Dominion will then be represented by a like functionary. This scheme for colonial representation need not be final; but it would, in any case, offer a satisfactory and simple solution of the difficulty of securing fitting representation of the Empire, and of giving the colonies a voice in the Ministry. After all is said and done, it is the Ministry and not Parliament which decides the issues of peace and war.

Unquestionably the foundation of this office—the agent-generalship—has done more than any other modern development to preserve the unity of the Empire. Little by little the officers, appointed by the colonies to represent their interests and views

at Downing Street, have grown in dignity and importance, until to-day they may be said to exercise a most commanding influence over the policy of the Government. Technically an Agent-General only represents the responsible Ministry which may be in power at the time of his appointment; but practically his office goes beyond this; and in many cases it is not too much to say of an Agent-General, that he speaks as an ambassador for the colony he represents. This is all the more so, because as a rule an Agent-General is not removed by succeeding Colonial Governments, at the termination of any given Colonial Ministry. Sir Charles Mills represented Cape Colony from the time of his appointment until his death. Sir David Tennant, his successor, has survived several local Ministries, two in any case, and so has Sir Walter Peace, who acts for Natal in this country. The office of Agent-General for the Australasian colonies has not been so staple; neither has the High-Commissionership for Canada been held so long and uninterruptedly by any given Minister as in the case of the South African envoys or ambassadors. An Agent-General is something more and something less than an ambassador. On the whole his office is more responsible and embracing than that of an ambassador.

Another influence making for imperial unity, must be recorded in the practice which received so conspicuous an enlargement at the time of the Diamond Jubilee, when every Colonial Premier was so dis-

tinguished, of making leading colonial statesmen and legal dignitaries members of Her Majesty's Privy Council. Again the summoning of Colonial Conferences, the first assembled in 1887 and the second, somewhat less informal in character, in 1897, has had a decided tendency to strengthen inter-imperial cohesion. The Conference of 1887 was summoned by Her Majesty's Colonial Secretary, the Right Hon. Edward Stanhope. It was a purely consultative assembly; and Mr. Stanhope's invitation was confined to the governments of colonies possessing representative institutions, and to the Government of the United Kingdom.

The subjects proposed for discussion were imperial defence, and imperial communication. The Conference met early in April, 1887, and was dissolved in May. It marked the first step toward the consolidation of the Empire; though I ought perhaps to mention that on more than one previous occasion, notably in 1876, when Lord Carnarvon summoned an informal conference of South African statesmen, Colonial Secretaries have sought direct advice from the statesmen of the colonies. The Conference of 1887 demonstrated conclusively that a deliberative assembly could easily be brought together from the uttermost parts of the earth; and how simple was the machinery necessary to give effect to conclusions arrived at, at such an assembly. Although this Conference was purely advisory, it was found possible to settle the question of Australian defence

out of hand. This was done by telegraphing for the assent of the respective governments to the scheme determined upon, and subject to the subsequent approval of the respective parliaments was made definitive.

Also it was clearly shown that sectional or local matters, that is to say matters affecting the well-being and interests of certain groups of colonies, could be discussed in sub-committee, so to speak, the non-interested colonies standing out. These discussions resulted in various consultations with the Home Government, and in the settlement of many outstanding matters of importance. The Conference proved conclusively that no colony was anxious to interfere in affairs as between the Home Government and a particular colony, or group of colonies, which did not concern it, and that while there was no disposition to meddle in other people's business, there was a healthy recognition of the fact that the large business of the Empire was also the business of each colony individually. The Conference was attended by the delegates—Prime Ministers or other representative statesmen—of all the principal colonies.

The Conference of 1897 was perhaps even more important and fruitful of results than its predecessor, ten years earlier. It was attended by the Prime Ministers of Canada, New South Wales, Victoria, New Zealand, Queensland, Cape Colony, South Australia, Newfoundland, Tasmania, West-

ern Australia and Natal. It may be taken as a sign of the times that the commercial relations of the United Kingdom and the self-governing colonies were, in this instance, the first matter to be considered. Obviously imperial defence, which was dealt with afterwards, and which was first on the agenda at the previous Conference, takes precedence of every question affecting the welfare and mutual interdependence of the component parts of the Empire; but until the colonies have some voice in the making and direction of our external policy, and until they are able to bring their weight to bear on any given issue determinative of peace or war, it is impossible to arrange a system which shall provide for the defence of the Empire on a co-operative basis. The commercial relations of the Empire and its common defence are, in a large measure, interdependent, seeing that contributions toward defence must be regulated by the financial position of the colonies, and that position is largely dependent upon the trade relations of Mother Country and colonies. As to a scheme of common defence no advance was made in 1897 on the previous Conference, which did not formulate any definite scheme, though Mr. Hofmeyr's suggestion that a tax of two per cent. should be levied on all produce reaching colonial ports from the Mother Country to be applied to defensive purposes, in the interests of the whole Empire, was received with considerable favour. That the Conference of 1887 was not

barren of results in this connection, I have already shown; while the second Conference was signalised by the unconditional offer made by Cape Colony, through the mouth of its then Premier—Sir Gordon Sprigg—to present the Empire with a first-class warship. This offer, when translated into fact, took the shape of an annual grant of £30,000 to the Royal Navy, which grant, as a matter of fact, goes beyond the original offer; since this sum capitalised, represents something more than the cost of a first-class battle-ship. At first sight the moral significance of this offer appeared to outweigh its material advantage. No doubt many of the members who voted for it were animated by patriotic motives; but in the light of subsequent events, it is impossible to take the votes of many members of the Africander Bond as earnests of loyalty. It is clear that most of these members have allowed their patriotism to be gradually whittled away by the specious representatives, and in some cases direct bribes, of Transvaal agents. The most that can be said for the votes of a large section of the Bondsmen is, that they show they still recognise the fact that, without the protection of the Empire's navy, Cape Colony would be at the mercy of any European marauder who might see fit to attack her. This, of course, is a cynical view to take; but an unavoidable one in the circumstances. It is not suggested that the majority of Cape legislators were animated by these selfish and sordid motives, and

the value of this majority's action is distinctly moral and imperial rather than material.

When Australia decided twelve years earlier to make some provision for the defence of its shores, it might be said that she was only doing in a small way what, were she independent of the Empire, she would have to do on a much larger scale. Were it not for the unfortunate considerations stated above, which no thinking man can ignore, the payment of £30,000 a year into the Imperial Exchequer, to be used for the defence of the Empire, irrespective of time and place, would put that gift on a higher platform than the Australian contribution. The Cape's action—but for the unfortunate suspicion which has now become fact, that many thousands among Cape Colonists of Dutch extraction are traitors to the Empire, and that of these, some among those delegates of the people who have taken the oath of allegiance to the Queen as members of the legislature have to be numbered—might have been taken as evidence that the Cape as a whole recognised that you cannot touch or menace the smallest colony without touching or menacing the whole Empire; and as a tacit but sufficiently important move toward a general recognition of the homogeneity, interdependence and cohesion of the Empire, and of the fact that the Empire can count upon the efforts of its outlying provinces, as well as its metropolis, to protect it against invasion or insult, thereby insuring that it shall escape whole

in the day when it is seriously menaced. So I confess I thought when the Cape vote was first cabled to England. But reflection brought ugly doubts, and those ugly doubts have since been more than justified by ugly facts.

To return however, to the Colonial Conference of 1897. While that Conference was careful not to commit itself to the advocacy of any particular scheme for improving the political relations between the United Kingdom and the self-governing colonies, it was careful to put on record its acceptance of existing relations as satisfactory for the time being. At first sight this resolution might appear to be an act of supererogation. But this was far from being the case. It was essential, in any event it was most salutary and useful, that the colonies should record officially their loyal acquiescence in existing arrangements; because busybodies are abroad who endeavour to put colonists out of conceit with their state, urging upon them the risks they run of being involved in disputes and wars which they have had no hand in making, and which do not concern their interests. Technically, this is unquestionably their position to-day, and as I have already said, it is a position which cannot permanently obtain; indeed, it is a disability of which they ought to be relieved as soon as possible. At the moment however, the time is not ripe for the removal of this disability or grievance. Meanwhile colonists can rest assured, I hope, that no responsible Minister of the

Crown would involve Great Britain in a general, that is to say, European war, without fully considering the interests and positions of the component parts of the Empire, and of that Empire as a unit, with the same singleness of purpose as he would consider the interests and position of the United Kingdom. Already the homogeneity and interdependence of the Empire are such, that no war can and would be waged in the interests of the United Kingdom alone, unless indeed it should so happen —to cite the exception is to suggest its impossibility —that the outlying portions of the Empire could or would be unaffected by the issue.

In the realm of commerce two most important resolutions were submitted to the Conference and passed. The first embodied an earnest and unanimous recommendation that the Imperial Government should denounce at the earliest convenient opportunity, any treaties which hampered the commercial relations between Great Britain and her colonies. Her Majesty's Government was not slow to give effect to this recommendation. It was notified to the Belgian and German Governments that those commercial treaties, which were a bar to the establishment of preferential tariff relations between Mother Country and colonies, should terminate on July 30, 1898. The Finance Minister of Canada soon afterwards responded by announcing in his budget speech, that the reciprocity section of the tariff would in future only apply to the United

Kingdom, India and certain other British colonies, and by announcing that the preferential tariff would be in any other British colony or possession, the customs tariff, which was as favourable on the whole to Canada as Canada's was to such colony.

The second resolution committed the Premiers to confer with their colleagues with a view to seeing whether the relations between the Mother Country and the colonies could be improved in the direction of giving a preference by the colonies to products of the United Kingdom. This of course, was only a tentative move, but it was one which may be fairly regarded as tending toward a scheme of protection within the confines of the Empire, and of exclusion from without, which in the fulness of time the well-wishers of the Empire hope to see perfected.

For the rest, the Conference recorded its opinion that periodical colonial conferences were desirable, and the exceedingly difficult question of the position of Asiatic immigrants in British colonies was discussed. Sympathy with the scheme for providing the whole Empire with the penny post, though it did not then go beyond acquiescence in the principle, has since been accepted by Canada, India, Natal, and later by Cape Colony also, the Australasian colonies being now the only important group which has not adhered to the Imperial Penny Postage scheme. At first sight this measure may appear to be one of comparatively minor moment; but as a matter of fact it is likely to prove to be,

and has indeed already proved itself to be, one of superlative importance. Those who remembered that an entire revolution in the domestic relations of the dwellers in the United Kingdom followed upon the introduction of penny postage within the limits of the British Isles, were confident that the cheapening of the means for inter-communication within the boundaries of the Empire would have a similar result. Sir Rowland Hill's penny postage system brought village nearer village, town nearer town, and province nearer province, so far as the Kingdom was concerned, and exercised a materially beneficent influence in knitting more closely together England and Scotland; unfortunately it is impossible to add Ireland; the means whereby that country may be joined more closely in affection to its sister Kingdoms has, alas! hitherto evaded all the efforts of statecraft and philanthropy. As touching Mr. Henniker Heaton's far-sighted scheme and its effects on the Empire at large, I shall have to say more in a later chapter. I may remark here, however, that its utility has been amply demonstrated during the war in South Africa. It has enabled the British public to learn what the censor would fain disguise, and it has been an incalculable boon to the soldiers fighting for their Queen and to their anxious relatives at home.

Before the Conference of 1897 dissolved, the Premiers put on record their opinion that the time had arrived when all restrictions which prevent in-

vestment of trust funds in colonial stock should be removed; a most important step toward the recognition of the unity of Empire and one which cannot be delayed much longer.

Apart however, from the direct results, and they were considerable, of this conference, indirectly it must be held to have accomplished much more. The occasion of its assembling, the celebration of Her Majesty's prolonged reign, sixty years of sovereignty, and the magnificent reception given to the civil representatives and military forces of the various colonies,—it was noteworthy, as I have already remarked, that the colonial Premiers and the colonial troops were only second to royalty in the eyes of the public—would not itself have guaranteed that the Conference, drawn together, at a moment which must be regarded as eminently a psychological one, should be fruitful of good and far-reaching results. It is always rash to prophesy; but one certainly runs very little risk in declaring that the year 1897 not only witnessed the sowing of seed full of high potentialities for the future power and permanence of the British Empire, but to aver that this seed has already sent forth growths so vigorous that they have, in the United Kingdom, stifled and killed outright those noxious weeds of disloyalty and separatism, by which during the earlier years of the Queen's reign the Empire as an enduring unity was threatened.

Signs of this healthy growth have been visible everywhere during the penultimate years of the

nineteenth century. Instances might be indefinitely multiplied, but seeing that no better proof of the depth and sincerity of any sentiment can be forthcoming than the readiness of individuals to risk their lives in giving effect to those sentiments, the spontaneous offers of detachments of colonial troops which reached the War Office from Canada, Australasia, Mauritius and other colonies should war result from the continued defiance of the Transvaal of her suzerain, offers which have since been made good and more than good by an imposing contingent of colonial troops, now proving themselves among the very best fighting material in South Africa, may be taken as proof positive of the deep attachment of the colonies to Her Majesty and to the Empire, and the generous recognition of the benefits of the imperial connection which now animates the length and breadth of the lands owing allegiance to the Queen.

CHAPTER VI.

FISCAL UNITY.

Professor Seeley, in that unimpassioned treatise of his, *The Expansion of England*, has been at great pains to show—and the more we ponder the chain of facts he marshals with so much skill and originality the more we are disposed to accept his conclusions, at first sight apparently fanciful ones—that the struggles with Europe in which England was engaged throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, were much more narrowly concerned with the rivalry for the possession of the New World than with the religious differences and dynastic quarrels to which those struggles are ordinarily attributed. But, however true this may be, and in the main it is true, it is no less true that the possession of the New World was, in the minds of the combatants, for a long while regarded not as an end in itself, but merely as a pawn in the game; the real impelling forces making for these continuous wars being hidden from the peoples engaged in them; and when I say peoples I include, in a large measure, their rulers. Those rivalries, jealousies and hatreds, which had their seat in Europe, we now know to have been of minor importance; but

to the combatants themselves they were, or appeared to be, the real bones of contention. It is, however, abundantly plain that during these ceaseless wars the real value of the New World never dawned upon the vision of the factions struggling to possess themselves of it. They could not regard it as a home for their children, because the constant drain on the manhood of the nations occasioned by this continuous warfare, precluded the very idea of a surplus population.

No. The New World was desired by European nations because of the military and political glory attached to its conquest and possession; and for the rest, it was regarded as a great estate from which supplies of gold, silver and precious stones, spices and tobacco might be drawn. And from it they did draw such supplies, or, to be more exact, the Spaniards and Portuguese, who possessed themselves of the southern and more central parts of the continent, did. In brief, transatlantic possessions were valued as swelling the importance of the nations to whom they belonged, and as fields to be exploited in the interests of the metropolis itself and its inhabitants, and not at all in the interests of the *bonâ fide* settlers, who, in most cases, were forced to subscribe to the revenue of the parent state.

England, it is true, drew little enough from the colonies which fell to her; while the memorable attempt she made to derive revenue from the New England States, resulted in her losing those States

altogether. The colonists, no doubt, were technically right in what they did, and the Home Government was wrongheaded and perverse enough. Nevertheless those States would have been absorbed by France, had not Great Britain come to the rescue; a fact of which the colonists were somewhat ungenerously forgetful.

India, of course, had a more direct commercial value; but then India did not contribute directly to the Imperial Exchequer. As time went on, and the East India Company had to give way little by little to imperial control, India became a source of direct expense to the United Kingdom. Still the tobacco of Virginia, and the sugar of Jamaica had enriched numerous Englishmen. So from the earliest moment when Europe began to concern herself with the trade of India, its products have enriched the nation that happened at the moment to control that trade. The Venetians, Portuguese, Dutch, and for a brief period the French, possessed themselves in turn of this valuable source of wealth. The influence of England began, of course, with the establishment of the East India Company in the last year of the sixteenth century. This company started as a trading association, pure and simple; but in common with other chartered companies—it is the law of their being and the necessity of their existence—it soon developed political and administrative functions, engaging meanwhile largely in the business of war.

The Indian Empire has not, of course, contributed to the upkeep of the British Empire. It has, indeed, though technically self-supporting, involved the central government in vast indirect expense. But, as in the case of the colonies, so in that of India. Its possession has added immensely to the power and wealth of the United Kingdom. In the early days of Clive and Warren Hastings, the merchant princes of India—nabobs they were called—settled themselves in every county in the Kingdom, diffusing their wealth, generally not too cleanly gotten, far and wide. This wealth represented dealings in indigo, cotton, spices, precious stones and works of art. The transference in the concrete form of the riches of India to Great Britain meant, of course, an important addition to those factors which have enabled us, as a people, to increase and multiply and replenish the earth.

When, therefore, a one-sided view is taken of the fiscal relations subsisting between England and her colonies and dependencies, it should be remembered that colonies are of great value indirectly as avenues for trade and commerce, and as means of accumulating wealth; and that this expansion makes for an increase of population, and acting and reacting, has a very direct bearing on the wealth of the nation.

To admit this need not blind one to the fact that under a well-devised scheme of reciprocity, that is to say, a scheme giving the preference to inter-

imperial traders within the Empire, those benefits which have indirectly accrued from the relationship of colonies and Motherland as it exists, might have been far greater than they have been. Mr. George Parkin, in that suggestive work of his, *The Problem of National Unity,* remarks that, "in matters of fiscal policy the British Empire at present occupies a position peculiar among all the nations of the world, in that for nearly half a century (Mr. Parkin wrote in 1892, and he is referring here to the passing of the Corn Laws, and the adoption of Free Trade in 1846) it has been without any fiscal system common to its various parts." When Mr. Parkin wrote, he declared that there were many signs of a disposition among responsible persons, several of whom had held offices as Ministers of the Crown, to re-consider the position of this country in the matter of Free Trade. At the moment of writing, there are, can it be questioned, evidences far stronger than there were in 1892, that Great Britain's leaders are wavering in their allegiance to a one-sided system of Free Trade, and that even among the members of the Cobden Club, signs are not wanting that the knees of the stalwarts are weakening. It is the characteristic of our race to cling tightly to any policy to which it has once given its unequivocal consent. It took years to induce the people of this country to accept Free Trade; as many years as it took to induce them to rouse themselves on the slavery question, or on the education question, to

mention a few of the most noteworthy instances in which national apathy has been galvanised into a national sentiment; a sentiment which, once translated into definitive action, has become a sacred article of faith, a shibboleth to conjure with, a law unalterable as were the laws of the Medes and the Persians.

The British race—I am thinking mainly of that portion of it which continues in the British Isles—is slow to accept any new idea or principle; but once having accepted it, it is slower still to recognise that the idea or principle has become obsolete in use; a stumbling-block in the way of further progress. The extraordinary self-sufficiency and overweening vanity of our people, invariably betray them into imagining this characteristic, this determination to stick to a worn-out principle, comes from national staunchness; whereas it is really due, as I have remarked elsewhere, to a certain intellectual sloth, a stolid resolve not to be troubled again with a controversy which, once having settled, they regard as settled for ever.

It may be allowed that it is fortunate for the English people that they are not so susceptible to new ideas, or so prone to abandon old ones, as their near neighbours; but this stolid reluctance to reopen a question is fraught with serious consequences. It is certain that millions of Englishmen accept Free Trade as the corner-stone of their country's prosperity, not because they have mastered facts

which would enable them to justify and uphold this belief, but because that belief was forced upon them in their extreme youth, or has been transmitted to them by their fathers as an indispensable article of a self-respecting Englishman's political creed.

At last, however, serious misgivings are beginning to trouble the minds of the most stubborn upholders of the doctrine of Free Trade; misgivings due, on the one hand, to the prodigious growth which has marked the final quarter of the century in the idea of imperial solidarity, and to the success with which certain foreign nations, notably Belgium, Germany and America, have beaten Great Britain in her own especial markets, the British colonies. The English manufacturer has become seriously alarmed; he begins to look to the rulers of his country to protect him against rivals who do their utmost to exclude him from his own markets. Again, the colonial side of the question begins to force itself upon the attention of the people. The West Indian group for instance, constitutes an object lesson in how not to govern an Empire. Jamaica, and indeed the West Indian colonies generally, are dependent for their prosperity, for their very existence, on their main industry—sugar. Now, owing to the policy of the whole of Europe—every country of which fosters the sugar of its own colonies by bounties, and excludes the sugar coming from foreign country or colony by duties—West Indian sugar has been unable to compete with the

sugar produced in other parts of the world. The cruellest part of this unhappy condition of affairs is revealed, when the fact comes into sight that the West Indies, under the operation of these bounties, are unable to send sugar into the Mother Country at a price which enables the growers to get an advantage over sugar coming from the colonies of foreign countries, or the beet-produced sugar of the Continent. The consequence of this is, that not only are the sugar-growers of Jamaica reduced to actual or comparative ruin, but the five million or so of British subjects—negroes, half-castes for the most part, but British subjects for all that, inhabiting the West Indian Islands—are reduced to a state always bordering on indigence; a state which quickly degenerates into starvation under the stress of any physical disaster, or financial crisis which may overtake the islands.

As a matter of fact, the West Indies are continually falling under the ban of calamity. For one thing, devastating hurricanes are always occurring. The years 1898 and 1899 witnessed such hurricanes. They were most severe, and in each case the Colonial Secretary had to appeal to the Lord Mayor to open subscription lists for the sufferers. It cannot be said that this is a very dignified proceeding. It ought not to be made obligatory on any large group of colonies to come periodically to the Mother Country for alms; merely because that Mother Country, to gratify its own selfish citizens, insists on keeping

sugar down to a price which spells ruin for those colonies. But the West Indies find themselves in this unhappy case. Since there are no imperial funds to supply the lack of local ones, these ill-used colonies have to rely upon private philanthropy in the hour of their need. The position is humiliating, and it is all the harder to bear in that these colonies are not, in any large measure, responsible for their misfortunes. They suffer from a vicious adherence on the part of the Imperial Government to a hard and fast fiscal system, which applied without distinction to all colonies spells ruin to one important group.

The Royal Commission which, a few years since, investigated into the condition of the sugar industry in the West Indian Islands, comprising Sir Henry Norman, Sir David Barbour and Sir Edward Grey, confessed that the sugar industry was not only in danger of great reduction, but of actual extinction in some colonies. It allowed that in many colonies the industry could not be replaced by others, and that its misfortunes were not due, in any considerable degree, to extravagance in management, or to inadequate supervision consequent on absentee ownership. In other words it declared that the real causes of the distress and failure, were radical and permanent, so long as the conditions obtained, now existing—the competition of other sugar-producing countries, and especially the beet sugar produced under a system of bounties. As to the remedy,

Sir Henry Norman alone had the courage to support the only possible one, the imposition of countervailing duties on bounty-fed sugar imported into the United Kingdom.

Now this West Indian question, this distress of the West Indian sugar growers, may be taken as a test question. It is proved conclusively that these colonies are being ruined because Great Britain refuses to help them against their rivals and enemies. They are our protégés; more they are our children. It is absolutely impossible for five million British subjects to prosper, unless we open to them our markets under circumstances which will enable them to meet their rivals and enemies on equal terms. As recently as June, 1898, the Belgian Government summoned a Sugar Bounties Conference, the only effect of which was to show that any hope that Europe would abandon direct or indirect export bounties on sugar, might be dismissed as a phantasy. The West Indian planters thereupon met at Barbados, and while expressing gratitude for imperial grants, very naturally and properly pressed upon the Imperial Government the necessity of excluding bounty-fed sugar from the British market, or to impose countervailing duties. But every British Ministry entertains a craven dread of the parrot-cry of the out-and-out Free Trader, which were any sign of yielding manifested, would immediately raise its voice in loud condemnation of the Government. The many-headed, persuaded that their holy of holies

was endangered, would take up the cry, utterly indifferent to the interests of five million British subjects whose home happens to be outside these islands.

It is this kind of insular selfishness which stands in the way of the complete unity of the Empire; and this form of ignorant insularity can never be effectually removed, until representatives of every portion of the Empire are able to lift up their voices in a real Imperial Parliament. Imperial federation is necessary in order to teach British governments that it is the duty of an imperial government to govern an imperial people in the interests of the entire nation; not in the sole interests of one of its provinces, for the United Kingdom is one province of the Empire, Canada is another, and the West Indies another. It is, as I have said elsewhere, sheer brutality, if it is not insanity, to sacrifice a whole group of colonies in order that the people of one province of the Empire—for after all, although it is its metropolis, the United Kingdom in relation to the whole Empire is merely its premier province—may reap a small advantage. Moreover in this case it so happens—I mention it incidentally, it in no wise strengthens the position taken up, although it makes the attitude of the case-hardened Free Trader the more untenable—that the benefit to the people of the United Kingdom is illusory. A farthing or a halfpenny, even a penny on the cost per pound of sugar, would be anything but an unmixed evil; indeed on the whole it would be easy to prove that the cheap-

ness of sugar is anything but a national blessing. It has certainly served the turn of one of the surgical professions, and largely increased the number of persons able to get a living by following the trade of surgical and mechanical dentistry. But these advantages to individuals cannot be set against the curse of unsound teeth and of impaired stomachs and digestions for which the lavish use of sugar is responsible. Intemperance in the use of sugar is said to be productive of the most painful and fatal organic maladies. These considerations, as I have admitted, constitute a side issue which does not affect the main issue—the duty of our rulers to rule the people of Great Britain as one nation, in the common interests of all, and not to keep their eyes on that section of the nation which happens to be nearest the seat of government.

It is true that so far this hard and fast adherence to the shibboleth of Free Trade has not, as Mr. Parkin has remarked, seriously affected the sentiment of imperial unity within the Empire; but it is becoming, year by year, increasingly evident that if we are to conserve the Empire, if its component parts are to continue to hang together, we must devise some means of avoiding such scandals as this West Indian business, and that in our fiscal dealings with the foreigner, we must show some regard to the interests, and for the sensibilities of the colonies. If they are to receive no favour which we do not grant to foreign nations, they will assuredly begin

to question the strength and sincerity of that regard and affection for them we are never tired of proclaiming. If, as I have said before, we persistently show that in governing the Empire, we are mindful almost exclusively of the interests of the dwellers in its metropolis, and look upon those of the advance guard in our colonies with indifference, the result will be disastrous to the imperial connection.

Happily signs are not wanting that the people of this country and their rulers—though the impulse must come from the people in a country where the so-called rulers follow in the wake of the doers and thinkers instead of leading them—are awaking to the exigencies of the case, and are coming to understand that an insular and a selfish policy is entirely out of date in administering the affairs of a nation which has burst the bonds of the leash which once confined it in the limits of its island home, and has spread itself over a fourth of the habitable globe. The United Kingdom with a population the density of which exceeds 500 persons to the square mile, must, in its own interests, have an eye on the well-being of those extra-insular estates wherein the density of the people to the mile is measured by a unit or by the fraction of a unit.

Now the case for the West Indies is one in which it is easy to prove that justice could be done to those colonies without affecting the actual well-being of the Mother Country. Similarly the wines of Australia, Columbia and South Africa might be ad-

mitted under conditions which would give them an advantage over the wines of France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Austria, without affecting the British consumer appreciably. At present Chancellors of the Exchequer turn deaf ears to the plea that colonial wines should enjoy preferential treatment at the hands of the Custom House authorities, on the score that no such preference is shown to British goods by the colonies concerned.

For my part, although I deplore the action of the colonies, I must say I regard, and have always regarded, this position, this *tu quoque* argument, as a somewhat unnecessarily narrow, not to say churlish one, on the part of a rich mother to daughters who, since they may be regarded as beginners, are entitled to a certain indulgence from a country which is after all, the author of their being. Moreover it is for Great Britain to set the example, and to trust to the generosity and good feeling of the colonies to follow it.

As a matter of fact Canada has already given earnest of her desire to admit the products of Great Britain and her colonies on terms which give them an advantage over the exports of the foreigner.

It is, however, when we come to that great staple, the breadstuffs, the free admission of which was the *fons et origo* of the free trade movement, that we find ourselves face to face, not only with the most important phase of the controversy, but with a phase which divides opinion by a more clearly

marked line of cleavage than any other aspect of this thorny question. It is scarcely necessary here to follow the great movement for the repeal of the corn laws, which may be said to have commenced immediately the twenty years' war with France culminated in the victory of England at Waterloo; a movement which was brought to a conclusion in 1846, when Peel carried his great measure whereby the grain of the whole world was admitted to our ports absolutely free of duty. It is a commonplace of history, that these duties, while they enabled two classes of the people, the landowners and tenant farmers, to prosper exceedingly, and as an indirect consequence, tended to keep a large section of the people on the land—this last a national benefit of unquestionable moment—inflicted terrible suffering upon the masses of the people, who were unable—and one is not of course dealing with the destitute and pauperised classes but with the wage earners—to purchase sufficient bread to keep their bodies in anything approaching a condition of proper nourishment. Obviously, almost any sacrifice was worth making in order to put a period on a condition of affairs so intolerable and so hurtful to the physical and indeed moral well-being of the people.

To admit this, is not to admit that after half a century the measure associated with Cobden's name is insusceptible of some modification and limitation. It is by no means certain that Cobden himself, were he alive to-day, would feel called upon to

defend absolute Free Trade. It is notorious that the original Free Traders anticipated very different results from the acceptance by the nation of the principle of free trade, from those which have actually followed upon it. They were never tired of proclaiming that England had only to lead the way, had only to hold the torch of Free Trade on high, and the nations of the earth would speedily follow the light. As a matter of fact the nations of the earth have done nothing of the sort. They have one and all grown steadily more and more wedded to the policy of protection; and while Great Britain has opened her ports to the free reception of almost all the products of the earth, the manufactures and hardwares of the United Kingdom have had to contend against a ring fence of the most rigid description, and her goods have been forced to fight their way, not only on the continent, but in the colonies, in the face of duties of the most stringent and exacting kind. The dream of the early Victorian Free Trader, good easy man, who saw in this measure the beginning of the millennium, when all nations should agree to put aside non-productive rivalries, and each following the particular bent of its national genius, devote itself to the exploitation of its natural resources, exchanging freely the result of its labours with its neighbours, has unhappily remained a dream.

It is not necessary to follow this matter further so far as it concerns Great Britain's relations with

the foreigner. What does concern us at this moment, in this last year of the nineteenth century, is the effect, the growing effect which the general adhesion of the world to the policy of Protection is having upon the minds of the statesmen, not only of the United Kingdom, but of the British colonies. Thoughtful men, of all shades of opinion, are beginning to take count of the undoubted fact that within the confines of the British Empire is to be found every product needful to man's well-being. Every necessity, and indeed every luxury of modern life, is capable of being supplied in abundance without going outside the boundaries of the Empire. No doubt this idea is still a nebulous one so far as the mass of the people be concerned; while even among those responsible ministers who have accepted it as a pious belief, there is a natural and perhaps excusable reluctance to proclaim the faith that is in them, lest they should be supposed to favour a return to those days, the Good Old Days, so called, when a 4lb. loaf cost 8d., and tea was considered a luxury by the middle classes, and by the working classes a rarely-attainable delight. Obviously the dread of any such calamity as this makes men harden their hearts against allowing the very suggestion to enter into them, of a possible reversal of the Free Trade policy.

Nevertheless the contentions of the advocates of Fair Trade make headway little by little; and there is a growing disposition to give them a hearing. To

take the vital question, the central question of all—the food supply. In recent years, the difficulty, often amounting to an impossibility, of making farming a commercial success, has forced itself upon the notice of those sections of the British public, by far the largest section of that public, which knows nothing of agricultural life. The children of the field labourers continually crowd into towns, bringing with them sorry tales of the barrenness and nakedness of the land; the dearth of remunerative employment through the failure of the farmers, and the consequent neglect of all agricultural interests. Even where things have not been so bad as to necessitate actual closing down, farms have become more and more pastoral in contradistinction to agricultural, grass has taken the place of corn, and fewer and fewer hands are required for tillage and cultivation.

Mr. Rider Haggard, in his recently published *The Farmer's Year Book,* gives a lively picture of the decadence of farming in East Anglia, which is also a picture in epitome of the whole Kingdom, and although the present writer has not that best of all rights to speak which a practical knowledge of farming gives, a life spent for the most part in rural England and a keen interest in rural affairs, enable him to testify to the general accuracy of Mr. Haggard's conclusions. The direct mischief, serious though it be, is not unhappily the most serious aspect of the matter. So far as the United Kingdom

is concerned, the constant infiltration of the field labourer into the towns must have a most baneful effect upon the virility of the nation; lowering the standard of its manhood, little by little, and robbing the nation of what after all constitutes its backbone.

Statistics prove that, after three generations, a family living wholly in London or other large city, and marrying exclusively into families which have lived under similar conditions, becomes extinct. The country districts produce the raw material, and although it is necessary that the towns should be constantly revivified by the country, the time is coming when, since the lame and halt alone remain on the fields, this healthful process of revivification must cease, for the country will cease to supply the sinew of the nation. It is essential that something should be done to stop this process of agrestic depletion; and it would seem that in a modified application of the principles advocated by the Fair Traders, a hopeful solution is to be found.

In this connection Sir Charles Tupper has boldly contended that it would be possible to put a duty of five shillings a quarter on foreign wheat, admitting colonial wheat free, without making an appreciable advance on the price of bread. He bases his conclusions on the fact that the Mark Lane prices of corn during the years 1890 and 1891, as attested by the Board of Agriculture, show that the prices fluctuated as much as ten shillings a quarter; and that it was not until the maximum advance of

ten shillings was reached, that a halfpenny difference was made in the four-pound loaf. Sir Charles Tupper argued from this that five shillings a quarter could be imposed upon foreign wheat without making any difference in the selling price of the loaf. Figures can be adduced, and have been adduced, by Sir Charles Tupper, Lord Dunraven and Mr. George Parkin, to prove that both in France and Germany increased duties on imported corn have resulted not merely in no increase of price, but in an actual decrease, internal development appearing to have more than compensated for the restrictions placed on foreign imports. It cannot be doubted that a like result would follow in the case of restricting the import into the United Kingdom of foreign corn. If, however, Canadian corn were allowed to enter free, it might be asked how would the British farmer benefit. That he would benefit I am assured, inasmuch as a duty of five shillings on foreign imports, would tend to steady and harden prices all round; while it is obvious that in any case some time would elapse before Canada would be able to send corn in such quantity as to seriously affect the market. Moreover, so soon as the principle of inter-imperial reciprocity were established, the duty would be regulated from time to time, so as to allow the British farmer to hold his own. Again, it is not necessary to let Canadian corn in wholly free from duty; so long as that duty is made considerably lower than that imposed on foreign corn, the principle will have been established.

Apart, however, from the consideration as to how the British agriculturist would be affected, it is obvious that were an Imperial Zollverein instituted, "a few years of strenuous effort would," as Mr. Parkin has said, "make the Empire self-sufficing in the matter of food supply, a result which would add enormously to its cohesion and unity." It would also, as the *Times* allows, secure for the Empire not only a vast reserve of political strength, but the command of large and rapidly growing markets, "while," to quote Sir Charles Tupper, "it would give stimulus to colonial industry, and increase the colonial market for British manufactures, to the great advantage of the British workingman."

Although it cannot be claimed as a rule admitting of no qualification, it is roughly true that trade follows the flag, or, as Mr. Parkin has put it, and I have advanced a like plea myself in many lectures and addresses, "social, political, financial and even *sentimental* considerations unite to create the wants of a people, and so in a measure to give tendencies to trade. It must be patent to the meanest intelligence that if you give advantages in the home market to colonial products, thereby increasing incalculably the demand for such products, a vastly larger number of British immigrants than the number at present absorbed could leave crowded-out Britain for the colonies. Also that these newcomers would need the manufactures of Great Britain, and that the demand for them would enable numberless

British workmen to find employment at home. By this means the whole nation at home and in the colonies would be vastly enriched and strengthened."

In discussing this matter, it is often remarked that the colonies have made the adoption of any such policy exceedingly difficult; since by adopting the principle of protection against the outside world, including Great Britain, they have definitively committed themselves to a method of raising the revenue, necessary for their respective requirements, a method it will be exceedingly difficult to replace by another. It must be remembered however, in this connection that, although in the infancy of the colonies, those imports on incoming goods were not only an exceedingly convenient, but one might almost say necessary means of raising revenue; with the growth of the population other sources of revenue present themselves. Thus the Cape budget for June, 1899, contained a suggestion for imposing an income tax; and there can be no doubt an income tax will be imposed in that colony. As I have said however, it is not necessary as a first measure, nor would it be expedient, to commit the Empire, as a whole, to a system of absolute free trade as between its component parts. That might come in the fulness of time. For the moment it will suffice, if the principle of giving preference to goods passing between the different parts of the Empire over those received into it from foreign countries is recognised.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century this

principle, gallantly fought for by the British Empire League, and by Sir Howard Vincent and other stalwarts here, and by many doughty champions in the various colonies, a principle long scouted as a sentimentality, has begun to take hold of the minds of the people; and in the early part of the twentieth century will not only be recognised as a principle, but acted upon as a practical and necessary measure to secure the defence of interests common to the English race the world over.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TENDENCIES OF INTER-IMPERIAL TRADE.

THAT great benefits to the Empire must follow upon the acceptance, and the practical application of the policy of free trade within its boundaries, and protection from without, may be ever so true; and ever so true the present writer believes it to be. It would be a mistake to forget however, that even as things are, Great Britain has derived, and continues to derive, immense trading advantages from the possession of colonies. From figures before me, I find that in 1887 the trade, export and import, of England with her colonies reached the magnificent total of £186,000,000, as against £21,000,000 which represented the total of France's trade with her colonies; Holland's in a similar connection amounting to £8,000,000; Spain's to £5,000,000, and Portugal's to £317,000. In 1800 the export trade of Greater Britain was 30 millions, and the import 25½ millions, of which 24 millions were done with the Mother Country. These figures represent the entire aggregate of trade.

To-day the figures are, or rather in 1896 they were: imports from India and the colonies, 241 millions, and exports to them, 229 millions, mak-

ing a total of 470 millions. The total trade of the United Kingdom was, in 1896, considerably over 700 millions, so that that of Greater Britain was nearly two-thirds as large as that of Great Britain and Ireland. In 1850 the combined trade of the Empire was 65 millions: We are therefore able to show a record of progress of which we have no need to be ashamed; though it would seem that 1890 was the record year for British trade. Then the imports and exports summed up, to take Mr. Mulhall's figures, to 749 millions sterling. This was equal to £20 per inhabitant. Mr. Mulhall reminds us, however, that the fall in value is due to a decline in the ratio of 15 per cent. in the world's price level between 1890 and 1896, and that, if the same level had been maintained, the merchandise exchanged would have represented a total of 850 millions sterling in the later year.

In any case the imports from the British possessions have, according to certain statistics before me, about quadrupled themselves since the beginning of the century. According to others the increase is far greater. Statistics are apt to be contradictory and confusing, and I may say that it is difficult not to become lost in their labyrinths. Nevertheless one can form broad conclusions from their study, one of which is that, although the imports from British possessions have increased substantially during the century, the imports from foreign countries have increased even more in proportion.

Thus it would seem that the imports from foreign countries to the United Kingdom amounted to £357,000,000 in 1897, as against 94 millions from British possessions.

From this fact it will be seen at once that, starting on the assumption, and it is a sound one, that with the encouragement of protection, even though the preferential duties in favour of the colonies were moderate, the outer Empire could send into the Motherland as plentiful, good and cheap a supply of all the necessities of life as that which now reaches her from foreign countries, and that an almost limitless development of the import trade between the colonies and the United Kingdom would follow on the adoption of a well-thought-out scheme of Imperial Reciprocity. The exports from the United Kingdom, which in 1897 reached a total of £87,000,000, would, of course, increase proportionately; because, as has been pointed out, free markets for colonial goods in the United Kingdom, and a material increase in imports therefrom, would mean a vast displacement of population from the Old World generally, not merely the British Isles, in favour of British colonies, and a concurrent growth in the demand in the colonies for the goods of the United Kingdom. For my part, I believe this result would follow upon the adoption in Great Britain of one-sided preference, the colonies making no commensurate concessions by abating their duties on British exports. This assumption however, is

never likely to be put to the test, seeing that the colonies would certainly make those reciprocal concessions.

I have already remarked that the decline of 15 per cent. in the world's price-level between the years 1890 and 1896 renders the figures of exports and imports somewhat delusive guides in estimating the growth of trade. Thus it would almost appear at first sight, that between 1887, when the total of inter-imperial trade is given at £186,000,000, and 1897, when this total is set down at £181,000,000, there had been a falling-off in the trade between the colonies and Motherland, and *vice versa*. This, however, is not the case. As to this fall in prices, Mr. Mulhall ingeniously shows that it has represented to Great Britain since 1850 a gain of something like 600 millions sterling. But that by the way.

Before leaving these figures, it must be, I think, frankly admitted that the export trade of Great Britain with her colonies has suffered severely from the competition of the foreigner; especially from American and German competition, and that the increase in that trade ought to have been much larger than it has been. The consular reports of the last few years have reiterated again and again the regret of Her Majesty's representatives at the supineness and procrastination of English manufacturers and traders, who, both in regard to their dealings with colonists of British origin, and with the aboriginal peoples of those colonies, steadily decline to advance with the

times, or to study the changing tastes and fancies of their customers, white and black—the African savage is, for instance, exceedingly whimsical in his tastes. Being above learning what is required of them, they have to give way to the foreigner; whose consuls are practically so many trade-agents, and advise their countrymen in Europe, engaged in colonial trade, as to the goods they should send out. This alertness on the part of American and Continental "houses," combined with greater energy, push and more frugal habits on the part of their employés, from top to bottom (this last qualification obviously applies to the European traders solely), together with a more liberal treatment of the importer in the way of samples and credit, is rapidly putting British merchants at a disadvantage in their own especial markets—the British colonies.

Nevertheless these markets are still of the greatest importance to the home-staying Englishman. Thus, in 1887, the annual value of English goods consumed in the United States was 8s. per head of the entire population. In Canada this annual value was 40s. per head, and in Australia £8 per head. I find that these figures are substantially correct as applied to the present moment. Taking those quoted by Mr. Parkin a few years ago, we discover that Germany and America consumed about 8s. per head annually of British goods, France 9s., Canada 35s., the West Indies 45s., South Africa 35s., and Australasia nearly £8. Thus three or four millions

of English folk in Australasia consumed more English goods than 50 million Germans, and nearly as much as upwards of 60 million Americans. To put the matter in another way, as Sir Rawson Rawson, or it may have been Mr. de Labillière, originally put it. As a customer, one Australian is worth to the British artisan 16 Americans, and one South African is worth seven or eight Germans. From these figures it can be seen at once how fallacious was the old idea that the migration of a British subject from the Empire's metropolis to a British colony was a loss to Great Britain. His continuance in this country would have meant that either in his own person he would have become worse than a non-productive factor, in other words a person chargeable on the rates, and as such an incubus rather than a gain to the community, or it would have meant that, having regard to the congested state of the district from which he went forth, his continued presence would have forced some other unit into the ranks of pauperism.

From this it may be further seen how incalculably the Kingdom individually, as apart from the Empire collectively—though the benefit to the Empire would be great if less direct, since the prosperity and well-being of the Motherland surely reacts on the colonies—would gain by the removal of her surplus peoples from the British Isles, where they are unable to expand and prosper, owing to the pressure of population and the stress of competi-

tion, and their plantation in expanses favourable to their development, where in due season they would become the customers of the kinsfolk they have left behind them.

It is the more essential to insist upon the advantages of colonial trade since, as I have said, its recent development, despite the vast increase of territory in Africa, has not been so continuous or satisfactory as all would desire. In 1887 I find myself writing: "The aggregate total trade of England with her colonies is five times larger than that of every Continental country possessing colonies with those colonies. The colonies are not only among our best customers now, they are daily growing better customers. In the twelve years between 1872 and 1884 our trade with foreign nations has decreased 23 per cent., while our trade with the colonies has increased 20 per cent. That trade follows the flag, is due to many reasons, reasons of convenience, reasons of sentiment and association, but above all to the fact that the commerce of a nation has to look to the navy of that nation for protection." The figures given in substantiation of the contention that trade with the colonies was increasing, were true enough then; but they are no longer true. Between 1875 and 1895, the ratio of increase with the colonies has, to put it at the best, remained stationary, whereas British trade with the United States rose 38 per cent. during those twenty years.

Still it is true, as Sir John Robinson said in his

admirable address, "The Colonies and the Century," that "as the century closes, the chief volume of colonial produce flows to home markets; and it can still be said that the British consumer, whether at home or in the colonies, does most of his business with the British producer." May he long continue to do so; for it is useless for the patriotic Englishman to blink the fact that the great hope of his country as a trading community lies within the area peopled by nations speaking his language. The Englishman, whether home or colonial born, has a rooted objection to acquiring the mastery of foreign tongues; and as a consequence is being beaten in every foreign market, save the United States, by foreign competitors, especially by the Germans, who are born linguists. It would be to step outside the scope of this volume, to say more than has already been said of the hurt done to British commerce by foreign, especially by German, competition; but the report of the Board of Trade inquiry into the development of British trade, proved conclusively that in many foreign markets Germany is persistently and surely ousting British enterprise, and diverting from us trade which we have been accustomed to regard as our heritage, or in any case to be had by us for the asking. It is the same story everywhere—lack of pliability and adaptability, and ignorance of the language of our actual or potential customers, are doing us immense damage. From Turkey, Poland, China, even from France and Italy, the same

tales come. The German and the Belgian stoop to conquer: the Englishman will not.

To this melancholy fact has to be added, as I have shown, that other disquieting fact, that to-day our rivals are beginning to invade our own especial tillage—our own colonial markets, and are threatening the monopoly; for in a large measure we still enjoy it, of those markets. As patriotic Englishmen, with a sneaking sympathy for old-fashioned methods of trade, in which a certain dignity and reserve temper pushfulness of the ugliest character, one is compelled to side with our commercial travellers and agents against their successful rivals. But as just men weighing the facts of the case, we are constrained to admit that our manufacturers and merchants and their agents deserve to suffer, because they refuse to bend to circumstances, and to march with the times; because, too, they have become careless in maintaining that high standard of excellence which used to characterise British goods.

If, as we may hope will not be the case, the successful invasion of Great Britain's especial markets—the colonial markets—continues, the outlook for British trade will be dark indeed. It is obvious that Germany's new-found zeal for colonial possessions, takes the shape of wishing to procure for herself the monopoly of colonial markets already existing. Germany is rapidly becoming a great manufacturing and industrial nation. She wants an outlet for her products, and for her people. The various efforts

made by the German Empire to acquire a footing in South Africa cannot escape our notice. Mr. Cecil Rhodes frustrated her designs in Matabeleland and Basutoland in the nick of time, and the prompt manner in which this nation cried "Hands off!" when Germany revealed her designs on the Transvaal, checkmated the scheme of the Colonial party at Berlin, which had hoped to possess itself of a ready-made colony in South Africa.

Fortunately the Imperial Government is now fully alive to the absolute importance to us of such markets as we have long possessed, and of those which have been added to the Empire in recent years; and England is not likely to forego her hold on them. The colonies themselves are proving to-day that they are no less determined that no part of the Empire shall slip from our grasp. Sir W. Lyne, the Premier of New South Wales, said, in bidding farewell to a contingent of New South Welshmen embarking for South Africa: "You will show the world that the Empire is united; and that we are prepared to defend her and our homes." This is the colonial spirit to-day, as it is the home spirit. And it is based on material as well as on spiritual things. Australia, for instance, has a growing trade with the Cape. Cape Colony—which would be distinctly menaced, politically as well as commercially, if any European power obtained a hold on the Transvaal, or if the Transvaal succeeded in asserting its independence of Great Britain—is among the best customers of the United Kingdom.

To come to actual figures and to begin with exports: We find that Cape Colony has her best customer in the United Kingdom, 95 per cent. of her exports coming to us. The percentage of New Zealand's exports home is also high, standing at 78 per cent. Ceylon comes next at 70 per cent.; Natal, Victoria, British Guiana and Canada at 52 per cent.; South Australia and the other colonies following on a sliding scale, until we reach Jamaica and the Straits Settlements with a percentage of 21 per cent. respectively. The average for all the colonies is 47 per cent. Of course the particular circumstances of the colonies have much to do with the trend of their trade. Groups of colonies, such as the Australasian group, which lie near each other, naturally trade largely among themselves; while colonies which touch foreign countries, as Canada touches the United States, must of necessity do a large trade with their immediate neighbours.

It is curious, that when we come to consider colonial and Indian imports, we discover the average for all the colonies of trade done with the United Kingdom is again 47 per cent., exactly the same proportion as in the case of exports from India and the colonies, while the trade of British possessions as between themselves is 27 per cent. Again Cape Colony heads the list. Her imports from the Motherland stand at 80 per cent. and Natal's at 76 per cent. India comes next at 71 per cent. New Zealand follows at 65 per cent. The Australian colonies range be-

tween 49 per cent. and 25 per cent., Canada at 36 per cent., Newfoundland at 20 per cent., and the Straits Settlements at 14 per cent. Obviously and on the face of them, the statistics in some of these cases are misleading; South Australia, for instance, receives 25 per cent. of her imports from Great Britain, and 67 per cent. from British possessions. Of these last, doubtless a considerable portion are English goods, which arrive in Australia at the ports of neighbouring colonies. Of course the possession by Great Britain of the largest mercantile navy of the world, and the fact that London primarily, and in a secondary degree the other great ports of the Kingdom, are centres of distribution for much of the produce of Europe, must be taken into these accounts. We are not therefore, to conclude that all the imports from the United Kingdom to British colonies are British goods. Still the discount to be deducted on this head is not considerable.

In estimating the growth of imperial trade, it is not sufficient however, to take into account merely the trade of the Mother Country with the colonies, or the trade of the colonies between themselves. In 1887, the imports into colonial possessions amounted to 203 millions and the exports to 205 millions. Thus, the total trade, £408,000,000, was rather more than double the trade carried on with the United Kingdom, which stood at £186,000,000. Ten years later, in 1897, this trade had increased by over a hundred thousand pounds; the grand total exceed-

ing 519 millions, as against 745 millions, which roughly represents the trade of the United Kingdom. It will be seen at a glance how important the commerce of our dependencies and colonies has become. If we deduct about half the total for the trade of the Indian Empire and Eastern Asia, for this amounts to £260,000,000 approximately, we have a total of nearly £260,000,000, representing the trade of Canada, British Africa, Australasia and other colonies, countries which contain about ten million inhabitants of European origin, together with about fifty million aboriginal or coloured peoples.

It is impossible for the most unimaginative person to be indifferent to the significance of these figures. One need not rhapsodise over them, since they are merely the shorthand marks of so much material progress. Still it is unfortunately too true that, given a civilised people, there can be no general happiness, no high standard of life, thought and conduct without a reasonable distribution of wealth. Individuals undoubtedly can and do prove the exception; and the day may come when nations—men having learned what "benefits men and to contract their wishes," to quote Landor, in other words, to understand that real happiness lies in having few external wants, and in simplicity of life—will attain to that true philosophy which is now, so far as nations are concerned, chiefly to be found among semi-savage peoples—the Zulus, for instance. But in the

case of nations which have accustomed themselves to a moderately high standard of living, the absence of material prosperity must mean that those people are unable to attain to their proper standard of life collectively: intellectually and spiritually. Obviously the converse is equally true. A plethora of riches, especially when those riches come suddenly, stunts a community, and as much, if not more than poverty, dwarfs it intellectually and spiritually. Excess of riches leads to luxury; and luxury to enervation, degeneracy, sloth and flappiness. I have just shown how too easy times are affecting the commercial interests of Great Britain; and how the over-confidence born of inherited, rather than personally-attained advantages, is robbing us of our own markets. I shall have to show hereafter how the like causes and the like results have affected our efficiency in the field of battle.

However viewed, this growth of the trade of Greater Britain is exceedingly significant. It may be slipping from us, but that is not yet; and as it stands, it is a tribute to the persistence and energy of our race in the past. It should give us heart of grace to believe that our sons and daughters will be equal to meeting the competition which, in a moment of restfulness and the consequent relaxation of vigilance, has invaded their domain.

It would be beyond the scope of this work, and it would certainly be beyond my powers, to attempt to give in minute detail—the detail for instance

which we find in Sir Rawson Rawson's exhaustive *Synopsis of the Tariff and Trade of the British Empire*—a work of the utmost value and interest prepared by the late Sir Rawson for the information of the Imperial Federation League—an analysis of the various tariffs in force in the different colonies. Sir Rawson Rawson's work, however, supplies me with several leading facts explanatory of the growth of Imperial Trade which it will be proper for me to include in this rapid survey of the trade of the Empire; a survey which makes no pretension to being elaborate in the sense in which Sir Rawson's marvellous synopsis is elaborate. My aim is quite different; the extent of my ambition being to convey, in the manner of the impressionist, a truthful and suggestive picture, so far as it goes, of nineteenth century progress. Sir Rawson Rawson, in dealing with the exports and imports of the Empire, gives the total trade of the British Empire for 1885 at 920 millions. This total was subject to deduction for trans-shipments from port to port in the United Kingdom, trade which in the returns had been reckoned twice, and bullion which had been counted twice over. On the other hand this total did not include the shipping trade, the coasting trade, and the extensive trade carried on by British shipping between the ports of foreign countries.

It is when we come to study the statistics of tariffs imposed respectively by the 44 colonies and dependencies of the British Empire that we are amazed at

the extraordinary evidence they supply of the adaptability and independence of our race, and the downright way in which English communities arrange fiscal matters to suit their convenience at the moment, with a quiet indifference to the shibboleths of pedants and doctrinaires. In any case, a calm examination of these statistics is enough to dismay the advocates of a common British Tariff. These enthusiasts, to use Sir Rawson's words, "can have but little knowledge of the difficulties which render such an arrangement impossible while the present system of taxation exists throughout the Empire." "The majority of those," he adds, "who desire closer commercial union, and believe it to be within the range of practical politics, have a very indistinct knowledge of the obstacles they would have to encounter, in coming to any adjustment which would be acceptable to the many members of the Empire." These are hard words, but they are true ones.

There is this general resemblance, with all their diversity, between the tariffs of the various colonies. They all admit free from duty any product which may be necessary for the purpose of encouraging local manufacturers; and they tax heavily any product which might compete with any natural or cultivated fruit of the soil in their respective colonies. For the rest, colonial duties are for the most part imposed in view of providing a revenue. As Sir Rawson Rawson

very sagely remarked, "In newly-settled and sparsely populated countries, such as most of the British possessions, the most convenient, if not the only source of revenue is indirect taxation; and the most certain, regular and abundant source of such revenue, the duties most easily levied and the least felt, and consequently the most acceptable to the population, are, beyond doubt, the customs duties." And let it be added, many an Englishman resident within the United Kingdom, to whom the vexatious iniquity of the income tax is a sore trial, obliging him to lay bare his losses in trade or professional disappointments—the successes of over-reaching rivals and enemies—envies the colonist, who in most cases is free from the insolent infliction of a tax on his income, a tax often exacted and dishonestly retained on an income which exists only on paper. The colonies, as I have said, adopt just such means of raising the funds necessary for their upkeep as may seem to them expedient. They tax themselves to meet their public needs; and in doing so are guided by local conditions and interests, which in new communities, necessarily in a state of flux, need to be constantly changed to meet fluctuating circumstances; for the most cursory acquaintance with the more recent history of the North American, Australasian and African colonies is sufficient to show that the conditions of life are constantly changing in all those great groups of colonies. The discovery of gold and precious stones, the opening up and irri-

gation of waste lands; the successful introduction of fresh industries—wool growing, for instance—may completely metamorphose pre-existing conditions, and render a reversal of the basis of taxation necessary.

I submit that in this readiness to adapt taxation to altered circumstances, the colonies teach the United Kingdom a lesson. Here, at home, the land continues to bear burthens which can only be regarded as ridiculous, when we consider how entirely its capacity to bear them has altered since the Corn Laws were abolished. Of course the United Kingdom in adopting direct taxation, and in admitting food and raw material free, is animated by the desire to keep the population well fed; and if we exclude the residuum, and the vagrant classes, well fed it is. Man for man, the Englishman consumes 121 lbs. of meat yearly as against 40 lbs. consumed by the Irish, 75 by the Germans, 70 by the French, 60 by the Austrians and 56 by the Belgians. So that the Englishman consumes twice as much meat in the year as the Austrian.

This is no doubt a national gain up to a certain point, though the necessity for so large a meat diet tells adversely in moments of crisis; witness the war now in progress. Moreover, allowing all food stuffs to enter the Kingdom untaxed, tends, as I have already shown, to keep thousands, not to say millions, of inhabitants in these islands who ought properly to leave them. It has resulted too, as we

have said, in the depletion of our fields, and in the herding together of our people in the towns, and in the consequent lowering of the standard of the country's manhood. The population of London in 1841 was less than two millions. It is now nearly five millions. Manchester, Glasgow, and indeed all the great towns of the North and the Midlands, have nearly trebled themselves during the same period. But it seems vain for our publicists to point out the manifold evils resulting from this unnatural state of affairs. Mr. Charles Booth has brought statistics to bear on the evil; his figures are so carefully arrived at, and so judiciously marshalled that there is no gainsaying his conclusions. At the very moment of writing, I am struck by an article in the *Morning Post* from the pen of Miss Frances Macnab, which, although it does not give fresh facts—that were impossible, since scores of writers of distinction have been hammering away at the evil for a decade or more—states the evil succinctly and vividly, and shall therefore be quoted here.

"The time," says Miss Macnab, "when men rose 'by the ladder of the land' from being yeomen to squires, and after a generation or so became lords of the manor, is long past. We have accepted the ruin of the agricultural industry as a condition incident to feeding towns as cheaply as possible. . . . It is possible to stand at the present time in villages which depression has half depleted of their inhabitants, and gaze over the long, broad valley in whose

hollow rises the smoke and glare of the largest city on earth—a city which adds to its East End fifteen miles of new streets in a single year. Then something happens which is positively comic, so curiously complex are our aims and so circuitous our ways of arriving at points. Then half-deserted villages are presently rendered hideous by the strains of a cracked horn delivering itself in a somewhat hazy rendering of a vulgar music-hall song. Then there appears from round the corner four tired, patient-looking old horses dragging after them a van tightly packed with a foreign element. These are Cockneys, who have come for a spell in the country, which consists in lavishing both time and money on the licensed victualler, who, to them at all events, has taken the place of both squire and parson. We hear of constant appeals for children's country holidays, but will a holiday now and then effect even as much as an old age pension to rectify the misery of child life in city slums?" Miss Macnab then proceeds to show that the large increase in our charities, the hospitals, waifs and stray societies, lunatic asylums, reformatories, training schools and the like, whether supported by the rates or by charities, "bear witness to the influence on the minds and bodies of our people under the increase of enormous cities." "Nor will," she continues, "the matter end there; for the character of the nation must ultimately be affected by this change from rural to urban conditions. Man cannot live by bread alone, however

cheap it be; and where, after all, is the economy in emptying our villages into the towns to corrupt and half kill our people, and then bring them back to lunatic asylums, hospitals and reformatories to remedy the troubles created by want of wholesome living."

I have quoted Miss Macnab because she has given in terse and nervous English, a picture as well as a description of the condition of affairs resulting from the depletion of the country, and the overcrowding of the towns, which, despite the fact that rigorous compression has somewhat impaired its excellence, it would be difficult to excel. In my own lumbering fashion I have been saying the same thing for years; and as a man whose life has been about equally divided between town and country, I know that Miss Macnab's picture is in no wise exaggerated.

It will be seen how increasingly important it is for a fresh stimulus to be given to emigration to the colonies, and migration back to the fields of Old England, when we come to coolly count the cost to the manhood of the nation of this continual drain upon its muscle and sinew which that great cesspool, London, exacts from the country. For London gives nothing back from what it takes. It simply consumes. And it is all very well for Mr. Mulhall to scoff at what he is pleased to call "arm-chair politicians," who, as he says, "cannot reflect without apprehension on the fact that we are dependent on foreign countries for our bread supply." His own figures show that be-

tween 1837 and 1840 the yearly output of native wheat averaged 2,800,000 tons, and that this average had declined to 2,720,000 tons between 1861 and 1870, and to 1,270,000 between 1891 and 1895, and this despite the great increase in the population. Wheat, it is allowed, shows the greatest decline; but for all that the farming interests generally have shown so rapid a decline, that there was a loss of 450 millions sterling between 1880 and 1895. According to Mr. Mulhall we can afford to take this loss with philosophic equanimity, since the increase in wealth in all other pursuits has been steady and uniform. To my mind this argument is of the shallowest description; it is impudently shallow. It is not merely that there has been no aggregate loss as to wealth; it is that there has been an incalculable loss as to welfare. The man born and bred in the country is not only ten times as happy as the man condemned to pass his days in town; but his joys are simpler, and his sufferings are less poignant. He is twice or three times the man. The mere criterion of increased wages is a valueless test. Town brings the masses into contact with vicious delights. They live in surroundings as tainted morally, as the air they breathe is vitiated. From the point of view of growth in trade, in exports, in wealth, no doubt the depletion of the fields and the decay of agriculture may be ignored, since material prosperity in the aggregate has vastly increased. But this surely is a superficial view.

The decrease in the agricultural population in the half century between 1841 and 1891 amounts to about 175,000, while the increase in the number of persons engaged in manufacture and trade during that period, reaches the amazing total of 6,415,000. Clearly the natural increase of the rural districts has gone, and more than gone, to swell the towns; for in 1841 the relation between the agricultural population to the commercial was as 2 to 1; now it is as 1 to 6.28.

That this is a satisfactory condition of affairs, it would need a great deal of hardihood to maintain. In a later chapter I shall have no difficulty in showing that the lot of the dweller in the country districts is vastly better now than in the earlier part of the century; and I have now no hesitation in appealing to the statistics and personal evidence cited in this chapter, "The Good Old Days," to maintain and emphasise the contention that, from the point of view of securing the greatest happiness of the greatest number, and from those national points of view already emphasised, it is of vital importance that, so far as the Empire's metropolis is concerned, the people should be retained on the land. It may be objected that the withdrawal of the people from agricultural pursuits, and their employment in manufactures, has indirectly been the means whereby the rural population has been able to procure a larger measure of comfort, in that the output of textiles and hardwares for which the foreigner has paid

handsomely, has resulted in a national profit, and by increasing the wealth and taxable capabilities of the people as a whole, has enabled successive governments to remove duties from those articles of daily use, tea, coffee and sugar, let us say, thereby placing them within the reach of the rural population.

So far as it goes, this contention is sound. But for the privilege of supplying the world with all manner of goods, in which shoddy plays no inconsiderable part, and the people, including the rural population, with a good deal of cheap and nasty finery, are we to break the back of the nation? The force of my argument is in nowise destroyed, because the counter-argument confuses a greater with a lesser evil. I say, finally, that whatever the cost to the people may be—and I dispute the necessity for these supposed sacrifices, since a falling off in the supply of factory labour would immediately stimulate the inventor to increase the efficiency of his labour-saving machinery—it is essential that the bulk of the people should be kept upon the land, or in any case should be kept in touch with the land. Else national decadence must inevitably ensue.

Factory life, any form of town life, continued through several generations means, as I have already said, the extinction of the family or race engaged in it. It may be ever so true that in order to maintain the lead in the commerce of the world; it is necessary to employ a large proportion of the muscle

and sinew of the nation in factory work. But the British race will discover that it cannot push the pace too fast. European races which have entered the field of industrial enterprise as our rivals, will also discover that they must not force the pace. That, in other words, it will not profit them if they gain the trade of the whole world, and in doing so sap the spring of national life—the virility of the people.

This is not a matter which merely concerns the United Kingdom. Indirectly it is, of course, obvious that it concerns the whole Empire: it has a direct bearing upon each particular colony. Hitherto, the colonies have relied upon a constant stream of the most adventurous and self-reliant factors of the rural populations to strengthen and establish their communities. What colonial-born Englishmen are doing in the field of battle now—the Australasians and Canadians are proving themselves to be equal to the Boers in *finesse* and resource, and are infusing brave but inexperienced English soldiers with their own admirable qualities;—what they have done on the cricket field, and in the realms of sport generally, would put me to an open shame were I to say anything which could be construed into disparagement of their splendid qualities. Still it is absolutely true to assert that the men who have made the most lasting impression on public life, and have had the widest influence in creating the history of the respective colonies, have been of English birth. The

reason for this is sufficiently obvious. As time goes on internal causes will remove this phenomenon; so indeed will external causes, for the right kind of man for colonial life, the country-bred man, will not be forthcoming from Great Britain. Roughly speaking, the average town-bred man, save in the case of highly skilled artisans, is small gain to any colony; frequently he turns out to be an incubus.

That a large proportion of British emigrants who now go to British colonies, are not of the right sort is made obvious by the fact that since 1891, or thereabouts, half of such immigrants have returned to the United Kingdom. Now, seeing that each able-bodied male or female settler is valued in the British colonies as equivalent to the addition of £200 to the wealth of the colony in which the settlement is made, it is evident that it is only on the assumption, that from a colonial point of view, a large proportion of the human goods sent to the colonies from the Mother Country were damaged, that their return home is to be explained. Had they been sound, the colonies would have made them welcome, would have made an effort to retain them, and would have succeeded in doing so. Of course there are exceptions to this rule. I have already referred in these pages to the fact that some of the colonies are exceedingly shortsighted in the matter of encouraging colonisation; and that for purely sectional, selfish and non-national reasons, the democracy has excluded newcomers because their rivalry might tend to lower the price of labour.

In considering, as I am pledged to consider in these pages, the British Empire as a whole, it will be seen how important it is to that whole, and especially during the next few generations, during which no colony can afford to be indifferent to immigration, to keep the standard of the British immigrant at as high a level as possible. Permanent deterioration in that standard would be a serious drawback to the colonies. How serious it would be to some of them, must appear from the statement a New Zealand colonist (Mr. C. Pharazyn) recently made at a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute. I have already referred to this statement, the importance of which cannot be exaggerated. Mr. Pharazyn says that next to France, New Zealand has the lowest birth rate of the world, and that as a fact the rate was steadily decreasing. Thus, in 1882 the birth rate per 1,000 was 37.33, and in 1898 it was 25.75. Obviously Mr. Pharazyn is right in regarding this as a most serious matter.

It is imperative for the colonies to develop their lands that they may help to contribute to the food supply of the world. It is therefore imperative that they should receive the class of immigrant who is able and willing to take part in this work. Consequently none but a socialist would contend that the decadence of the agricultural population of the United Kingdom was a matter which had no concern for the colonist. On the contrary, it is a matter of the most vital importance to him.

Meanwhile, until some sensible readjustment of the fiscal policy of this country gives the agriculturist a chance of success, the Empire as a whole must begin to turn its eyes toward Outer Britain rather than Inner Britain as the future field for the development of our race; though, unless some readjustment is arranged, some system protecting agriculture at home and fostering it in the colonies, there will be a very short future for our race. To speak of a readjustment of fiscal imposts and economical taxes, does not imply that the writer has any kind of belief in the immediate possibility of a uniform tariff throughout the Empire. A close study of Sir Rawson Rawson's statistics is sufficient to satisfy the most enthusiastic advocate of a British Zollverein, that such a system is impossible, not only now, but probably for all time. Also any heavy taxation of foreign corn in order to benefit the farmers of the United Kingdom and of the colonies is out of the question. But a moderate tax so as to give the nation's farmers a chance—and when I speak of the nation I mean the whole Empire—is, *pace* the Cobden Club, an entirely sane and sensible suggestion, and one which it behoves the Legislature to translate speedily into fact.

So far however, as this vexed question can be arbitrarily treated, this question as to how we are to maintain our commercial supremacy, and yet keep the physique of the nation up to a high standard, let us see to it that we never drift into that miser-

able morass in which the wheels of progress must be permanently arrested, and in which, being once in, it will profit us nothing to discover that our distress is due to having put the cart before the horse. It is clearly a case of putting the cart, that is the merchandise of the Kingdom, before the horse, that is to say, the pulling power, the virility and strength of the country, if we allow our thoughts to centre on huge and increasing trade returns, while neglecting to maintain the physical standard of the people. That we are doing this just now, I am absolutely certain, despite the figures forced upon us, many of them obviously false and misleading, by that school of Cockney optimists which views all public questions through its own delusive lenses, through which it can see no progress, save mere material progress.

The present writer may perhaps be pardoned if he appeals to a record dating from boyhood to substantiate a claim to sound imperialism; but it seems to him little short of a mystery how any self-respecting Englishman can sympathise with that shallow school of writers and speakers which, deceived by the bulk of our trade, dance to the tune of "Rule Britannia," forgetful that much of that vaunted trade represents base metal. There is nothing very noble in flooding the world with shoddy; and it is to be feared much of our export trade is not unfairly described as coming under that denomination. Again, however small one's sympathy may be with the out-

and-out believers in the democracy, or in their right and capacity to rule—and manifestly no such sympathies can be fastened on to me—the student of history must recognise the fact that an effete democracy is a far more serious danger to a nation than an effete aristocracy. After all the basis of a ruling aristocracy is in the people, from whom through various stages of development the men fit to rule must be evolved. If you destroy the people, you have destroyed the sources from which the men who make a nation great and powerful in relation to other nations must be drawn. Therefore let us beware here at home and yonder in the colonies of that mad pursuit of trade and wealth, which blinds the eyes of a people to the price paid for their attainment. In other words, look to the health, moral and physical, of the masses. This can only be done by keeping a large proportion of the people in and on the fields. In recent years Great Britain has ignored this necessity; and in estimating the progress of the Empire, one is bound to admit that a considerable discount, though the bill has not yet become due, will have to be allowed for the loss of stamina and staying-power which the neglect of this quite elementary law of material well-being has inflicted on the nation.

I am aware that in the eyes of many ardent imperialists the writer who ventures to look beneath appearances, and who suggests a somewhat different reading of those figures upon which it is the habit of the rampant-lion school to dilate with unalloyed

satisfaction, is held to be guilty of something like high treason to the Empire, and to be deserving of severe reprobation.

I take a different view of a patriot's duty. The progress of the Empire has, of course, been all that is ordinarily claimed for it. It has been colossal, phenomenal. But in all businesses there must be a profit and loss account; and it behoves the controllers of the business of the Empire to see to it that they do not bring it to ruin by taking no reckoning of the steady deterioration in stock and in working plant—the sinews and muscles of the people—which so far as the metropolis of the Empire is concerned—the United Kingdom—is steadily resulting from the vicious economic conditions under which the fiscal policy of the Empire is conducted.

CHAPTER VIII.

GROWTH OF WEALTH: REVENUE AND DEBT.

At the beginning of this century the revenue of the outlying portions of the Empire amounted to 31 millions, and of this total India contributed the bulk; not more than 3½ millions representing the revenue of the various colonies. It would appear that when the Queen came to the throne, the revenues of Greater Britain exhibited some shrinkage from these figures. The figures for that year (1837) for the whole Empire are set down at 75 millions, of which total the United Kingdom contributed some 50 millions and the Indian and Colonial Empire 25 millions. In 1850 the revenue of India was 27½ millions, and that of all the other British possessions 3⅔ millions. To-day (1897) the total revenue of the Empire amounts to 225 millions, of which the United Kingdom supplies less than half, or in actual figures, 110 millions.

Here then, is a record of progress of a truly remarkable character. A feature of the highest significance is discovered in the fact that the self-governing and Crown colonies now raise a revenue nearly equal to that of India; for out of the total,

£115,000,000, no less than 62½ millions must be credited to India, and 52½ millions to Australasia, Canada, and the African, West Indian and other colonies. Here assuredly is a record of progress which must give pause to the most persistent advocate of a restricted England, meaning, as it does, that the isolated units who have gone out from these islands and planted the flag of England in distant lands, have amply justified themselves by adding enormously to the aggregate wealth of our race. Obviously a revenue of upwards of 50 millions annually means an immense diffusion of wealth, and of such happiness as wealth can bring.

It may be true that under an entirely different economical system, any one of those admirable systems—admirable paper systems—devised by humanitarian doctrinaires, the various schools of socialism, so called, whose propagandas have been so widely promulgated in recent years, Great Britain and Ireland, especially Ireland, could and should support a much larger population than that which they actually support under existing economic systems. But the practical politician knows that it is impossible to arbitrarily remodel institutions, or to control tendencies which have grown out of the clash of diverse interests, and of the activity, for good or evil, of successive generations; individuals, classes and generations striving to adapt themselves to circumstances quite as strenuously and persistently, if not more so, than they have striven to make circumstances

adapt themselves to them. That, in fact, revolutions can never be successful permanently, unless they occur at that penultimate moment when the changes which they actually register have already been silently and gradually achieved; the actual revolution merely putting an official seal on a deed already drawn up and signed by the people. The practical politician knows that human aspirations and desires in working out their fulfilment, proceed along the lines of least resistance; and that it is as impossible to give concrete effect to any policy; until that policy has been recognised to be an actual, or, in any case, is believed to be an actual necessity of its well-being by the majority of the nation. One may stimulate the growth of a growing human body by a judicious system of physical culture, but we cannot materially hasten the processes by which an infant becomes an adult. The foolish attempt to do so, is certain to result in the crippling or extinction of the organism so treated.

Similarly, a people cannot be brought on to a higher national platform before they are ready to climb to it; and the effort to do so may result in the crippling or the ruin of that people. It is of course scarcely within the province of this work to deal with the growth of any particular realm of abstract thought; though something may be said as to this, in dealing with the intellectual progress of the people. All that it is necessary to advance here is, that however true it may be that given the accept-

ance on the part of an earnest minority of those noble ideals—equality of responsibility as to work and play, together with equality in the distribution of wealth—such ideals are outside of the scheme of the work-a-day life of the nineteenth century, which among the many idols it has set up, has set up a standard in living to which the vast majority of men and women aspire, and the satisfaction of which is necessary to their happiness. Wealth and material comfort have perhaps been pursued less for the sake of the things themselves, than in obedience to that all-pervading impulse of rivalry and competition which may be taken as the note of the century; an impulse which has kept at bay the opposing impulse making for a community of interests and possessions. Doubtless this has been well, for it has supplied the rude force necessary to impel men to tear themselves from their homes, and go forth into the wastes of the earth to make fresh homes in lands where, whether it be true or not that there was room and to spare for a vast increase of our race at home, such a proposition admitted of no gainsaying.

Therefore it is permissible to point to the material well-being of the colonies, as justifying the extraordinary sacrifices their acquisition and maintenance have entailed upon the Mother Country. In men and in treasure the processes of acquiring them have cost much. To this we must add the no less enormous sacrifices they have entailed on the best

blood of England; the gallant pioneers who have spent themselves freely in securing for Great Britain lands whereon she might build her Empire on broad and wide foundations. In this enterprise they have accounted their lives as nought. So far then, as between Mother Country and colonies, the honours of the foundation and continuance of the latter are divided, and remembering this, we know that the British Empire stands upon a basis of common obligation and esteem, as between its metropolis and its outlying provinces, which is a sure guarantee for its endurance.

But this by the way. To return to the figures with which I was dealing. The trade of Australasia with the Kingdom is, as we have already seen, only second in importance to that of the Indian Empire with the Mother Country. Similarly, the revenue of this group of colonies is larger than that of any other group, reaching in the aggregate £30,000,000. Canada's revenue is £8,000,000, and that of the Cape and Natal, £7,500,000. These figures are worth pondering. In fifty years, to quote Sir John Robinson, "the sum total of income throughout the colonies has grown thirteenfold. Fifty years ago, the colonies received in their exchequers about one-fifteenth of the amount of the national income. To-day the proportion is a trifle less than one-half."

The ex-Premier of Natal has also made some exceedingly pertinent remarks on the expansion of colonial debt. In 1851 the public debt of India amounted to 55 millions sterling; it is now 235 mil-

lions. During the like period, the combined indebtedness of the colonies has advanced from 5½ to 334 millions. "This stupendous fact," says Sir John Robinson, and I quote his words, because I thoroughly agree with them both in substance and in form, and coming as they do from a colonial statesman of eminence, they carry great weight—"that Greater Britain owes, mainly to British bondholders, a sum roundly estimated at 570 millions, may perhaps be regarded by political pessimists with foreboding, if not dismay. But what does it mean? A stifling load of national obligations, do you answer? —a crushing burden upon national energies?—an exhaustion of national resources, of national strength? Nothing of the kind. This huge aggregate of funded debt, which gives the holder of every pound's worth of stock a vested interest in the Colonial Empire of Great Britain, means life, expansion, progress, commercial development and industrial activity throughout one-fourth of the world's surface. It means 36,000 miles of railway, giving employment to, who shall say, how many hands of British subjects, carrying how many tons of merchandise and produce, conveying yearly how many millions of passengers, and opening up how many thousands of square miles of territory in and through territories which fifty years ago were untrodden and unmapped wilderness?" Sir John goes on to speak in eloquent terms of the triumphs of engineering, road-making and irrigation; the erection of

public buildings, universities and libraries, forts, batteries, lighthouses; the reclamation of waste lands, the exploration of mining areas, and a score of beneficent works besides represented by these millions, which, as he says, mean, "in a word, the awaking into life and activity of a sleeping world." "These millions of colonial debt are not," he continues, "like the millions of old-world national debts, the outcome and equivalent of wasteful wars. They are rather a solid investment of capital applied to eminently reproductive purposes, yielding not only in most cases a substantial monetary return in the shape of interest actually earned, but yielding also, in a measure that cannot be expressed by figures, benefits of incomparable value to mankind at large."

Now all this is so much plain unvarnished truth, and by no means overstates the case. Calm consideration of these figures, these millions owed by the colonies to the bondholders of the Empire, mainly to the people of the United Kingdom, should convince the most sceptical that there are substantial reasons, quite outside sentiment, why the colonies and the Mother Country should hold together. Year by year the reluctance of the investing public to trust their savings to the nations of the Continent, in any case to the majority of those nations, becomes more and more marked. The prudent financial adviser warns off intending investors in the funds of European countries with *Punch's* admonition, "Don't!"

Defaulting has been already too general; and the habit is likely to prove contagious. Colonial securities, on the other hand, grow in favour with the *bonâ fide* British investor. If we add to the several hundred millions he has lent the colonists, so far as their public funds are concerned, the vast sums he has invested in the industries of these colonies—shipping, mining, wine-growing, sheep-farming, ranching and so forth—we find how intimate the commercial connection is between the Motherland and the colonies, and how inalienably the interests of mother and daughters are interwoven; in other words, how absolutely interdependent the Empire is as to its various parts. This is a strong argument indeed for continued harmony; for tightening the bonds, since any loosening of those bonds would destroy that sense of security which the holders of colonial stock feel, by reason of their confidence in Great Britain's willingness and ability to protect the colonies against all-comers, while maintaining in perpetuity the connection which, by common consent, binds mother and daughters together. The independence of the colonies would practically mean the relegation of their various stocks to a third or fourth place in the stock-and-share list, instead of a prominent place in the class which Capel Court, in its wisdom, chooses to call "gilt-edged securities." All later loans would moreover, be required to bear a higher rate of interest, and would have to be issued at a heavy discount. Their sponsors would have lost their main-

stay; and John Bull would look askance at them. The loss to the credit, not only of the colonies, but to Great Britain itself, would be enormous, since the world regards the United Kingdom as its banker, and so far as the colonies go, as a banker who has advanced money on property he means to protect.

On the other hand, if, as the Colonial Premiers more than hinted they would like to see effected, the Imperial Government should decide to remove those restrictions which prevent investment of trust funds in colonial stock, the gain to the colonies would be enormous. They would then be able to borrow money at the rate of 2¾ per cent. instead of at 3½ and 4 per cent. as at present. Existing bondholders would reap the advantage in the enhanced value of their holdings.

As recently as August, 1899, Mr. Chamberlain took a step in this direction, a most salutary one for the Crown colonies, in securing the passage of the Colonial Loans Bill. This Bill provides machinery for the investment of savings bank funds in colonial loans guaranteed by the Imperial Government. Mr. Labouchere, writing in his journal, was pleased to stigmatise the measure as "Doles for Pauper Colonies." We might let that pass, since the day has gone by when Mr. Labouchere can hope to influence opinion. The seventeen colonial loans mentioned in the schedule, amounting in the aggregate to £3,351,820, were all, according to Mr. Labouchere, loans to insolvent colonies. The Gold Coast,

Niger Coast Protectorate, Lagos and Sierra Leone were one and all, he objected, dependent for their revenue upon the duty on imported spirits. Now, as a matter of fact, the Colonial Office at the Brussels Conference on the sale of alcohol to native races, held earlier in the year, used its utmost endeavours to get that duty raised so as to make trade-gin, if not wholly beyond the reach of the natives, at least very difficult to obtain. Again, although from the point of view of settlement and colonisation, it is questionable whether the West Coast can ever be converted to profitable uses—for even the comparatively healthy uplands must be approached from the fever-haunted coast—it is obvious that these co-called insolvent colonies are rich in undeveloped wealth; and that with the growth of the country, other revenual resources will become available.

Obviously Jamaica, one of the colonies included in the schedule, is in an extremely unsatisfactory financial position. But it is, as I have already hinted, in the power of the Imperial Government to remove the causes of this unsatisfactory state of affairs by the imposition of countervailing duties, and by extending financial help to enable the ruined planters to rear central factories where sugar could be crushed by modern machinery by which the cane could be made to give double its present yield. Such a measure would, I believe, enable the planters to regain for the West Indian Islands their lost pros-

perity. The Imperial Government has already done something in this last direction, and it will probably do more. In any case, as Mr. Chamberlain said, in submitting his bill, we already for all practical purposes, guarantee the loans of all Crown Colonies, because in no circumstances could we allow them to default. Mr. Labouchere's subtle mind suggests to him a devious motive in all human actions outwardly of a laudable character. It is true he stopped short of accusing the agents and representatives of the Crown Colonies of direct robbery; but he did not scruple to suggest that these gentlemen encouraged expenditure in public works in order that they might put contracts in the way of their friends; a proceeding which would obviously be moral robbery, if not of a kind likely to bring the delinquent under the ban of the law.

Mr. Labouchere's cynicism is quoted, not because any value attaches to it, but because it is a sample of the tactics of a whole army of crooked-brained persons, who do not hesitate to attribute every evil design to men engaged in the business of building up the Empire. And unquestionably some of the mud thrown by these ill-conditioned persons—covert traitors—does stick. As a matter of sober fact, the Colonial Loans Bill was an entirely proper one. An imperial people could do no less than guarantee the money borrowed for public purposes, by the less prosperous provinces of the Empire, and the introduction and passage of this bill show that the Gov-

ernment of Great Britain is awakening to a due recognition of the solidarity and interdependence of the Empire.

One welcomes this evidence the more cordially, inasmuch as, despite the undoubted growth of colonial trade in the bulk, it is to be feared, as has already been hinted, that inter-imperial trade shows tendencies which cannot but give imperial statesmen pause. Sir John Colomb has recently said that, if he read statistics aright, the percentage proportion of the total of colonial trade which flows to and from the Motherland is shrinking rather than expanding; and that, although colonial trade as a whole was expanding, the tendency was to find markets elsewhere; and to forsake the home markets. "If," said Sir John, "we could arrive at a point when the trade of the colonies with foreign countries is greater than their trade with the Mother Country, the Little Englanders would be armed with a strong argument." This is undoubtedly a danger ahead. We have seen how the High Priest of Little Englandism has endeavoured to thwart the Government in its efforts to aid struggling Crown Colonies; and nothing would please that party more than to find itself in a position to point to the uselessness of the larger colonies as markets for the United Kingdom.

In considering the growth of the British Empire one must of course, take into consideration the advance made by its component parts, as well as the

advance made, being made, or to be made, or the decline, as the case may be, in the prosperity of its metropolis. It is quite on the cards that Great Britain might compensate herself for the loss of colonial markets by developing her trade with foreign nations; though I have already shown the difficulties which lie in the way of such a policy. It may be argued, too, that so long as the various parts of the British Empire were prospering as units, it would not matter whether that prosperity was based on an interchange of goods from within the Empire, or from without it. For my part, I regard this argument as a singularly shallow one; since any arrangement which might be made in order to facilitate and expand trade between the Mother Country and the colonies, would be a permanent one, permanent because it would have the tacit guarantee that it was perfecting an economic and effective system of common defence for all the Anglo-Saxon states included in the Empire. How great and increasing the common interests of these states are, the figures already given, dealing with public interests, suffice to show. These interests and possessions are in themselves enough to excite the cupidity of foreign states, and do excite their cupidity, as the Continent is never tired of proclaiming; but when we consider how enormous is the wealth already accumulated in the colonies by private individuals, and how splendid are the potential resources of them all, the necessity of conserving and husbanding the strength and re-

sistive powers of the British race must be apparent to every patriotic citizen of the Empire.

It would be interesting, were the statistics available, to set forth what is the exact wealth, its exact total, of Greater Britain. Take Canada, for instance, and take one branch only of its wealth-producing resources—the agricultural industry. This industry has expanded so marvellously, that in 1894 Canada's farms represented a value of 305 millions sterling, against 125 millions in 1861. The area covered is now between 35 and 40 million acres, the size of the Empire's metropolis, and larger. This area is increasing at the rate of 1,400,000 acres yearly. Mr. Mulhall estimates that it would take 700 years to settle the fertile portions of the Dominion, supposing the rate of enclosure to continue as in recent years. As Mr. Mulhall further shows, in everything, except commerce, Canada has made the most favourable progress since the Federal Union of 1867. The increase in the grain crop in twenty-five years, from 1871 to 1895, was 140 per cent.; in manufactures, 113 per cent.; in revenue, 106 per cent.; and in the value of house property, 130 per cent.; for in 1871 this item was valued at 46½ and in 1895 at 98 millions. Commerce alone shows during that period a comparatively small advance. In 1871 it totalled 39½ millions, in 1895 46¼. Mr. Mulhall does not hesitate to attribute this disparity to the "insane tariff regulations," but for which "imports and exports would have

increased," he maintains, "in the same degree as the agricultural and manufacturing industry."

Principal Grant has made some extremely pertinent comments on the external trade of Canada. "Let it be clearly understood," says this authority, "that Canada has only two markets worth speaking of. One of them, Great Britain, she shares on equal terms with every foreign nation, and from the other, the United States, she is debarred so long as she is connected with Britain. The former would be as open to her as it is now, were she to unite commercially with the Republics and against Britain, and were she to do so, she would then at once get the other market also." Principal Grant was of the opinion that the adoption of the preferential system for the Empire, would force free trade relations with the United States, in that the American voter is so keenly alive to the importance of the British market, "the mere prospect of a preference being given in it to his rivals, would be enough to bring him into a business frame of mind."

Mr. John Charlton, representing the Liberal party in Canada—a party which came into office under the leadership of Sir Wilfrid Laurier—to carry free trade with the United States, declared some little time ago that, should Canada be finally baulked of her endeavours to obtain a reciprocity treaty with the United States, his party would reduce the balance of trade against her by the reduction of American imports and would cease to discriminate against the Motherland.

In any case it is significant that since 1895, when the exports and imports of Canada amounted to 46½ millions, there has been a marked increase in the totals. Thus the exports for 1896–7 were a trifle under 29 millions, and the imports slightly under 25 millions, the total of both amounting to £53,772,000. For 1897–8 there was a total gain of nearly ten millions sterling, the exports amounting to £33,226,-200, and the imports to £29,230,400. Thus, in three years the trade of the Dominion has increased by sixteen millions sterling.

These figures are sufficient to prove that, although Canada started on her real career as a nation nearly a century later than the United States, the day may come when her property and wealth will equal that of her southern neighbour. Mr. Mulhall says that the reason the United States have absorbed more than 70 per cent. of British emigration since Britons began to emigrate on a scale of any importance, is to be found in two main causes. First, that the cost of passage was less; and second, because the American Government gave free farm lots of 160 acres to newcomers. For my part, I regard this explanation as wide of the mark. Those reasons existed, no doubt; but they were small ones in comparison with the fact that the War of Independence gave the United States a big advertisement, and established for her a prestige which attracted the adventurous; that the Republic was able to offer ready employment, and that she had many years' start as to rail-

ways. Again, Canada was handicapped for many years by reason of the preponderance, in such parts of the country as were occupied, of colonists of French descent. The tie being cut with France, French immigration ceased, while the inhabitants of the settled districts, being mainly French, the human magnet for Englishmen was non-existent in Canada.

Nevertheless these statements must not be taken as indicating a direct sequence of causative events. This is not so. Thus the emigration from the United Kingdom to British North America between the years 1830 and 1840 reached a total of about 321,000, during which period scarcely more than half as many persons went from these islands to the United States. During the next ten years the figures were 674,000 to the United States and 428,376 to Canada. It is a wonderful fact that, out of these totals, Ireland contributed 646,195 souls. Between 1850 and 1859 British North America took 258,460 British immigrants and the United States 1,351,000, to which enormous total Ireland contributed over a million.

It is not necessary to follow these figures further; they are introduced here to qualify the statement that the United States has invariably taken the bulk of British emigration; and to substantiate the inference that the tide may turn, and Canada become the recipient of the crowded-out people of the United Kingdom, instead of the United States. It cannot be said that there is any present indication that Can-

ada is destined to add to her wealth in this way, since the total emigration to Canada has shown a steady falling off since 1888, when the figures were 34,853. In 1897 they were 15,571. But during these years the emigration to the United States shows a relative diminution, while more significant still, the number of British immigrants returning to these islands has, since 1888, averaged about 100,000 a year.

I fear however, that it may seem to many that I am wandering somewhat from the actual subdivision of my gigantic subject. I have erred in this before, and I may err again. I claim indulgence.

The author of the chapter on *Colonial Policy and Progress in the Reign of Queen Victoria*, edited by Mr. Humphry Ward, says, rather "previously," that in the 30 years before federation the progress of Canada was greater than in the period succeeding that achievement. He wrote in 1887, and was therefore comparing unequal periods of time. As he says however, the artificial stimulus resulting from the Civil War in America (1860–66) had ceased to exercise any influence in 1887, while the repeal of the Reciprocity Act between Canada and the United States checked the development of trade. But that Canada has now entered upon a period of rapid development for which, since the adoption of the Federal Act of 1867, she has been preparing herself, need not be questioned. The purchase of the Hudson's Bay rights, comprising Manitoba and the

North-West Territories, took place the year after the establishment of Federal Union. By this purchase the Dominion acquired for a mere mess of pottage, the paltry sum of £300,000, a magnificent inheritance. Even so far as Manitoba alone is concerned, "you may," to quote Lord Brassey, "drive a gig for a thousand miles straight over open prairie suitable for wheat-growing."

In this alone, her grain-growing potentialities, Canada possesses a guarantee of future solvency and wealth of the most sterling character. Again, after every allowance is made for exaggeration in the tales that come to us from the Klondike, that district, and indeed a large portion of Yukon and British Columbia, are likely to justify the opinion of Mr. W. Ogilvie, the Dominion Surveyor and Commissioner for the district. Mr. Ogilvie pronounces it to be one of the largest and richest mining areas of the world. The output for the 1897–8 season was stated to be anything between two to five millions.

Apart from the unquestionable value of these gold mines, the North-West provinces have enormous mineral resources of a humbler description. Its vast coal fields are already producing moderately good coal, and are showing a profit in working.

Enough has been said to prove that Canada, in any case, has made great and substantial progress during the century; and that she is not only capable of supporting a population twenty times larger than

she at present boasts (5,250,000), but that she may be counted upon to feed the Mother Country for centuries to come, and to add materially to the wealth of the world.

In many ways the progress of Australasia is even more remarkable than that of Canada. Its aggregate debt, amounting to something like £200,000,000, can be lightly borne, for the greater part of that debt is represented by reproductive assets. According to Mr. Mulhall, 85 millions sterling is the moiety of the debt which cannot be so regarded; but it is difficult to accept these figures, since Australasia, never having gone to war, and never having been threatened by war, can scarcely have incurred a debt amounting to 85 millions on objects incapable of yielding a return on the money expended. Mr. Mulhall points out, however, that in any case this 85 millions is only 8 per cent. of the aggregate wealth of Australia, the ratio of the national debt to national wealth being 6 per cent. in Great Britain and Ireland and 12 per cent. in France. Quoting Coghlan, this ingenious writer (Mulhall) says that in 1888 the wealth of Australia amounted to 1,136 millions, as compared with 26 millions in 1838. Certainly an extraordinary increase, and one which, although it doubtless suffered considerable temporary diminution in the early nineties, when Australia experienced a sharp commercial set-back due to the reckless way in which the banks advanced money, is probably maintained to-day. The average

increase of £22,200,000 per annum represents a far greater increase in individual wealth than the citizens of the United States can boast; for although that country claims that each inhabitant accumulates yearly twice as many sequins as every inhabitant of the Mother Country, the Australian, man for man, puts aside twice or nearly twice as many pounds annually as the American.

Obviously the two main sources of Australian prosperity have hitherto been gold and wool. Taking into account the recent discoveries in Western Australia, it is more than probable that the total output of gold since the first tentative discovery in 1823 exceeds in value £400,000,000. The yearly wool clip is valued at £25,000,000, representing a value for the half century alone of £800,000,000. These products are a direct gain to Australia, since the bulk of them is exported. They are a direct gain to the Empire also, since the bulk of their money value is spent on imported British products. In 1891 the total value of the agricultural crop was £22,000,000. The fruit crop was worth three millions; honey, poultry and eggs, another three millions; while the dairies, chiefly of New South Wales, Victoria and New Zealand, produced at the rate of seven millions yearly. I was about to say in my haste that the produce represented in this 22 millions sterling was mainly consumed in Australia itself, but the statement would be inaccurate. Australia, as New Zealand, is not only sending frozen

and tinned meat in large quantities to this country, but fruit also. Moreover, the Cape receives large and increasing consignments of meat, butter and eggs from Australia. Then there is wine-growing, an industry which in several of the colonies is making rapid progress.

When it is remembered that at the accession of Queen Victoria, Australia was popularly regarded as a continent vast, unwieldy, and unproductive; of little use to the Mother Country, save as a dumping-ground for her criminals and for "ne'er-do-wells" generally, the remarkable progress of the country is among the phenomena of the century. Between 1840 and 1850 the rate of material progress in the premier colony, New South Wales, was slow. The marriage rate rose slowly, and the increase of population was mainly due to fresh arrivals from England. Of course, as in every other part of the world where gold has been discovered on a large and payable scale, the fortunes of Australia were established by the successful search after that mineral. It is significant that it was the Californian discoveries which led to the systematic quest of gold resulting in the finds at Bathurst and Ballarat. These discoveries synchronised with the opening of the second half of the century. As if by magic, the prospects of Australia were entirely revolutionised. Stagnation and listlessness gave way to activity and progress. The motive of the early seekers after gold, or, to be accurate, their backers, was to arrest emigration from

Australia, and to stimulate immigration into it. And the success of the search met with its anticipated reward. The population increased by leaps and bounds. In five years it was more than doubled; the exports were more than five times as large, and the imports more than six times; while, as showing how narrow that school of political economists is which deplores these meteoric discoveries of gold, in that, as they say, men are drawn from the nobler vocation of tilling the soil, to a feverish and unhealthful, morally and physically, pursuit, it must be recorded that in the first five years of discovery the amount of land under cultivation rose from 450,000 acres to 650,000. The Hon. R. Stout, in his *Progress of New Zealand*, tells us that agriculture was stimulated vastly in the southernmost island of the Australasian group, a ready sale being found for its products in Australia. Moreover, as Mr. Gonner remarks, when the mines became less and less productive, the population which had worked them did not quit the country, but spread itself over the land.

Not only then is an agricultural population attracted by the proximity of mines, in that the miners must be fed, and are ready and able to reward liberally those who administer to their needs, but gold advertises the capacity of a country to maintain a people by the products of the soil, and men, able and willing to bring those capabilities to fruition, are already on the spot and in a position to

draw others to them. Thus, in 1856, the amount of land under cultivation was, as we have seen, 650,000 acres. The number of sheep was 18,000,000. In 1873 there were 3,300,000 acres of cultivated land and the sheep numbered 74,000,000. In 1897–98 the sheep in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia alone appear to have aggregated 82,000,000, while the area under cultivation had also increased.

No better way of bringing home to the imagination the substantial progress Australasia has made can be given, than Mr. Gonner gives in the volume to which I have already referred. Before 1837, he says, "the average man would have cultivated one-quarter of an acre of land, and owned twenty sheep, while he would have exported goods to the value of £9 and employed less than two tons of shipping. Now he would cultivate nearly twice the acreage, and own rather less sheep, but his exports would be nearly double, and the amount of shipping put in motion by him would be actually doubled. Then his share of the revenue was £3, and now it is £6 11s." The writer is comparing a population of upwards of 3 millions now with 15,000 or so in 1863. Since Mr. Gonner wrote in 1886 or thereabouts, the population has increased rapidly; and to-day the above figures would need to be expanded; though, having regard to the temporary check Australia experienced in the early nineties, not very materially.

There are of course more ways of demonstrating the rapid growth of Australia than those already brought forward. New South Wales has now between twenty and thirty thousand factories, and the deposits at the Australian banks probably exceed £100,000,000. The number of letters per head annually sent through the post is about equal to the number circulated through the post of the United Kingdom.

The progress of New Zealand, notwithstanding the recurrent Maori wars, which were the commonplaces of the earlier years of its settlement by British colonists, has been no less remarkable than that of the mainland. The pens of J. Anthony Froude and Anthony Trollope, and those of hundreds of other writers, have convinced most stay-at-home Englishmen of its manifold charms—climatic, scenic, and social. It has, too, the distinction of being the most go-ahead of all our colonies. In the direction of social and political experiment, it has adopted and put into actual practice many of the most advanced reforms conceived by the politico-social philosophers of the Motherland.

There are other colonies and groups of colonies in which the advance has been conspicuous, though not so conspicuous as that of Australasia, or indeed that of Canada. So far as Africa is concerned, the Southern colonies are of course of infinitely greater present importance than the Western or Eastern settlements; while their future promise is out of all

comparison greater than that of the most promising British colony in any other part of the African continent. Moreover, South Africa is the keystone of the Empire, and from that point of view alone is all-important. For this reason and for reasons stated already in earlier chapters, and above all because at the moment of writing, events are in progress which make it impossible to deal with South Africa satisfactorily, I shall treat the progress of South Africa as it affects that of the British Empire in a separate chapter, toward the end of this volume.

It will be proper to say that although neither British East Africa (Uganda) nor Nigeria (the West Coast generally) is likely to become of importance as a home for Englishmen, both have, especially Nigeria, great present value, and the promise of greater future value, as trading centres. The country washed by the Niger is densely populated; and the natives, as tradesmen, are for savages on a somewhat high plane, for they retain in many instances some of the characteristics of their ancestors, or predecessors in possession of the territory: the negro kingdoms of the Middle Ages. Moreover, the country is rich in palm oil, hides, rubber, gum and probably in minerals. Ashanti, which, like the Niger Territory, has cost us several minor wars in recent years, is certainly rich in minerals; and if the price quoted in the market for the shares of a company concerned in exploiting its gold fields may be taken as a criterion of its wealth in gold,

Ashanti must be reckoned among the future gold-producing countries of the world. The Gold Coast Colony, which now includes Ashanti, was founded in 1868. It has a revenue of £230,000, a Public Expenditure of £265,000. Its imports are £931,537 and its exports £877,000. The revenue of Lagos is £179,000, its Public Expenditure £168,000, its imports £901,000 and its exports £975,000. The revenue and expenditure of the Gambia amount roughly to £25,000 in each instance, and its imports and exports to £110,000 and £117,000 respectively. Sierra Leone receives £105,000 and spends £116,-000. Its imports and exports are about equal. They fall about a hundred thousand pounds under the million. The imports and exports of the Niger Coast Protectorate, and the Royal Niger Company (the latter now absorbed into the former by the Act of 1899) fall little short of three millions. This colony is, I think, destined to be of great commercial value. Unlike the other West African colonies, it has a vast territory and population; its hinterland, though somewhat circumscribed by the agents of France, stretches far into the interior, and includes uplands of great value which may even be utilised for colonisation. As has been said already, we owe this colony in the main to the energy and persistence of one man, Sir George Taubman-Goldie, a man the British Empire will ever have cause to remember with gratitude, for had he not stood in the breach, the fairest portions of West Africa would have

slipped from our grasp. The indifference and procrastination of our rulers have been the means of our losing much that ought to have been ours; but a substantial territory remains, thanks to the efforts of this patriotic Englishman, who must rank as one of the active empire-makers of the century.

As to East Africa, that country remains to prove itself. For the moment its value is strategic rather than commercial, in that its proximity to the Soudan enables Great Britain to keep out certain possible intruders by way of the eastern coast. So far, too, as the other colonies and dependencies of the Empire are concerned, it may be said in every case, I think (Egypt and India and the Asiatic possessions excepted), that their importance is subsidiary to that of some larger possessions, and from the point of view of direct contributors to wealth, they do not make, and are not likely to make, any great show. Thus in the Mediterranean, Gibraltar, Malta and Cyprus are all of strategic rather than commercial importance. Mauritius and its dependencies have of course, considerable commercial value in addition to their vast importance as defensive factors. The exports and imports of Mauritius fall little short, taken together, of four millions; and its revenue and expenditure little short of one million sterling. Bermuda, Bahama, Ascension, St. Helena and the Falkland Islands are again mainly valuable by reason of their geographical position.

That Egypt is intimately associated with impo-

rial progress is as self-evident as it is undeniable, though whether or not it is strictly correct to include it in the British Empire I do not know, and I must frankly add I do not care, since our position there is practically regulated by the Anglo-French Convention of 1899. France is the only power which at any time was likely to challenge our right to remain in the country, unless that challenge were a part of a general movement against us. In regard to Egypt, it is obvious that our presence there is largely due to strategic reasons. Certainly the country contributes nothing directly to the wealth of the Empire, though our presence there benefits many Englishmen whose capital is invested in Egyptian Funds, as in a similar connection it benefits many Frenchmen and the citizens of other nations.

The story of our connection with Egypt is full of interest; and I must say it tempts my pen. But exigencies of space necessitate vigorous self-repression. For all practical purposes it will suffice to say that Great Britain's first appearance on the scene as arbiter of the destinies of Egypt, was in 1875, when Lord Beaconsfield was astute enough to buy the Khedive's Suez Canal shares for four millions sterling. The money was merely a sop in the pan; for the Khedive was madly extravagant, and his finances going from bad to worse, England and France interfered on behalf of British and French bondholders. In the end the practical control of the country was in the hands of the Finance Ministers

appointed by the two countries. This dual control (1879–83) was terminated by the ineptitude of France, who refused to take her share in repressing the insurrection of Arabi Pasha. It may be said then, that since 1880 the authority of the Sultan of Turkey, already a shadow, has been reduced to a figment, and England, preserving the nominal authority of the Khedive, has really ruled the country; though it has needed twenty years to establish the authority of Egypt over the provinces of the Soudan which revolted under the Mahdi in the first instance, and his successor, the Khalifa, in the second. The failure of the Egyptian troops to suppress the Mahdi's insurrection, led to the memorable expedition of General Gordon, and to the murder of that heroic Englishman at Khartoum. For a time the Soudan was abandoned, but in 1895 Great Britain began to put into execution her long-matured plan for its reconquest. Lord Cromer, the Consul-General at Cairo, and the Sirdar, Lord Kitchener, brought that work to completion, step by step. Dongola was occupied in 1896, Omdurman in 1898, the Khalifa was tracked down in the last months of 1899, and Osman Digna, whom many have regarded as the *fons et origo* of all the mischief, was captured in the first weeks of 1900.

Under the British rulers, Egypt has been made a self-respecting, self-supporting country, with a revenue well in excess of its expenditure, a system of justice and education has been established, the oppressive pashas suppressed, the land irrigated, and in brief,

from a land of misfortune and unhappiness, Egypt has been transformed into one of the best governed and most prosperous states of the world. So absolute has been the success of British administration, that the young Khedive, who, for several years after his succession to the throne gave the English rulers endless trouble, has at last thrown off his evil French and native advisers, and has openly confessed that Great Britain has proved herself to be the friend and benefactor of his dynasty, his people and his country.

I have dealt thus briefly with the dealings of the British Empire with Egypt in this place because, primarily and technically, our presence in the country was due to a financial reason, and in the second degree due to our position in India, with which Egypt, being a half-way house, is intimately connected; and so being, its control must ever be a matter of importance to Britons. Moreover, I propose to conclude this chapter with some further reference to India, a reference which must be final. As in the case of Egypt, in that of India the magnitude of my theme obliges me to exercise compression whenever it is possible to do so; and assuredly the fact that no less an authority than Sir Richard Temple is to deal with the progress of India, releases me from the obligation to do more than merely indicate her place in the great scheme of the British Empire.

Whether India, taken as a whole, and taking the

enormous increase of her population into consideration, has really grown in wealth, it is hard to say. Truth has many facets, and in studying the complex problems connected with the growth of British power in India, it is possible to see in this increase of her people an increase of imperial wealth, while it is impossible to ignore the view that, in multiplying so quickly, the people of India are running a great risk of outstripping the resources of the peninsula. However this may be, it would be foolish for any one to attempt to deny that under British rule during the century, the condition of the people has steadily improved. They are no longer allowed to die of famine; in any case stupendous exertions are made to save them from this fate. They are not subject to continual unrest and warfare; their lives and property are secure, while they have been freed of various brutal institutions which, under the cloak of religion—and no doubt they were generally believed in by the people—condemned numbers of blameless women and innocent infants to death. It is I think, impossible for the most bitter opponent of English rule in India to question the material, social, and, so far as an appreciative minority goes, moral advance of the Indian peoples since they have come under the dominion of Great Britain. The people have few requirements, and are accustomed to the simplest living. But there is an irreducible minimum of subsistence to fall below which means starvation. It has been for many a long year the business

of British administration to keep the food supply from falling below that minimum. Assuredly it cannot be said that this ideal has possessed Great Britain throughout the whole of the century. The annals of British rule in India would give unhappily, the lie to such a contention. But in any case, during the Victorian era, whether India was under the rule of the East India Company, or under the more direct Imperial control which has obtained since the Mutiny, it is obvious the effort has been made to save the people from impending famine, and in most cases successfully.

Again, that the incidence of taxation presses far less heavily on the individual under the present régime than in any other period of recorded history, is safely to be assumed. Thus the annual revenue of the Emperor Jehangir (1609–11) was £50,000,000, and of a later Mogul Emperor, the famous Aurungzebe, something like £80,000,000. Now it is obvious that this revenue must have been derived from taxation three times heavier than that which the British Government imposes; since although the area of Aurungzebe's empire approximated fairly nearly with that of British India to-day, the population must have been infinitely smaller, since it was constantly decimated by disease, famine, war, and under the recognised systems of judicial and sacerdotal murder which obtained.

Since the accession of the Queen we have added greatly to the area of British dominion in India,

but when we consider that the revenue was £22,000,000 in 1837, £37,000,000 just before the Mutiny, £71,000,000 in 1885, and £100,000,000 or thereabouts to-day, and these facts are taken in conjunction with those others, viz., that there has been no increase of taxation, on the contrary, taxation has been mitigated, and that there was no considerable increase of territory between 1885, when the revenue was £71,000,000, and 1898, when it was £98,000,000 (this is reckoning the rupee at its face value of two shillings), it is obvious that there must have been a wonderful growth in the population. There doubtless has been a far more effective system of tax collection in recent years. No one properly amenable to the tax has been able to escape. What is even more to the point, a proof is afforded by this constant inflation of the revenue, that the money collected now goes into the public exchequer, instead of sticking to the palms of the collectors as in earlier years.

It is to be noted that so far as the land tax goes, Akbar's revenue from this source in 1605 is given at 17½ millions. A century later Aurungzebe's land revenue amounted to 38 millions. But in 1837 the East India Company only received 12 millions from this source. In 1884–5 it was rather less than 22 millions, and to-day is represented by something like 27 millions. Again it must be remembered that these figures are based on the nominal value of the rupee, two shillings, whereas that coin, fluctu-

ating with the price of silver, varies in value from 1s. 2d. to 1s. 4d.

It may be seen from these figures that India has made real material progress so far as the bulk of the people goes; but whether British occupancy has had any marked moral or intellectual effect upon any but an almost undistinguishable minority of the people, may well be questioned. Professor Max Müller seems to incline to the belief that it has; and his opinion commands respect. In any case it cannot be denied that British influence has endowed India with the curse of a small body of noisy stump orators, who are vainly endeavouring to popularise Western institutions in an uncongenial Eastern environment; and, in plain English, are labouring, consciously or unconsciously, to incite the people to rebellion. It has endowed it, too, with a vernacular press which has a like tendency. In other respects, from all I can learn, it seems to me that the mental outlook of India to-day is very much what it was in the days before Clive and Hastings laid the foundations of British power in that vast country.

The public debt of India was estimated at £232,-339,028 in 1897; but it is necessary to remember that a very large proportion of this total is scarcely to be regarded as a debt in the sense that our National Debt is a debt. It is not dead money; so far as nearly £100,000,000 goes it is reproductive, the capital, as in the case of Australia, having been spent on constructing public works, which, to use Sir Henry

Maine's words, now contribute a larger total of receipts to the treasury than the whole of the interest payable to the original lenders. And this authority further says the hopeful part of the business lies in the fact that these public works—railways, canals and irrigation works—show a tendency to become more and more productive; thereby reducing the liability on the expenditure incurred in waging war and kindred expenses.

To complete this rapid survey of the financial position of the Empire, it is necessary to add that, from the point of view of trade, the Straits Settlements and Hong Kong are of great importance. Hong Kong has a revenue of nearly half a million, and its expenditure somewhat exceeds that sum. The statistics of its trade, which is most considerable, are not available. The imports of the Straits Settlements exceed 20 millions and its exports are a trifle over 23 millions.

CHAPTER IX.

HOME GROWTH.

The statistics of those robust optimists, Sir Robert Giffen and Mr. Michael Mulhall, are, so far as my knowledge extends, unimpeachable; nor do I know that they have ever been seriously or successfully challenged, save so far as comparatively unimportant details go. These authorities make out a glorious case for the growth of national wealth; and unquestionably the progress of the Mother Country has, on the whole, been marvellous, and especially marvellous in the years following Her Majesty's accession; for prior to that date, or more properly, prior to 1830 or thereabouts, the nation had scarcely got over the exhaustion and listlessness resulting from the long duel with France. To put it in another way, the nation could not readily divert its thoughts and energies from the channel in which they had so long run, and, strange as it may seem, for some time the cessation of the war put, positively, a check on progress which, nevertheless, as I have shown, had been during the war itself considerable.

While however, such figures as Mr. Mulhall's are undoubtedly trustworthy in themselves, they convey, standing alone, misleading impressions, which

need to be corrected by a close study of figures and data of a less optimistic character; figures and data to be found, for instance, in Mr. Charles Booth's *Pauperism: A Picture,* and *The Condition of the Aged Poor,* and in writings bearing upon the sufferings of the "naked and destitute," such as George R. Sims' *How the Poor Live,* and General Booth's *In Darkest England.* Such reading will cure one of any tendency to undue optimism.

It is of course, impossible to deny that there has been a steady decrease in pauperism since the middle of the century; though the returns for the United Kingdom still show about a million paupers, or about 1 in 40 for the entire population. Having regard to the enormous advances made in the wealth of the middle and working classes, this state of affairs cannot be regarded as even approximately satisfactory. For my part, I confess I am in no degree impressed by these heaped-up statistics of national prosperity; for, side by side with this prosperity and possible happiness, we have among us an enormous minority —the actual paupers are only a small portion of the whole—of poverty-stricken persons, many starving and all—save those few who, armed by temperament or some other internal aid, rise superior to circumstance—living in a condition of abject misery and hopeless despair.

We will not again traverse the ground over which we travelled in dealing with actual and potential colonisation, but I must once again protest against the

danger of being misled by those flourishing visions of national progress which statisticians of the roseate order are so quick to force upon our acceptance. It was Professor Thorold Rogers who said that there was a large population collected in our great cities, which equal in number the whole of the people who lived in England and Wales six centuries ago, " whose condition was more destitute and whose homes were more squalid, whose means were more uncertain, and whose fortune was more hopeless than the poorest serf in the Middle Ages." This is not the language of hysteria or sentimentality. Personal experience and knowledge lead me to accept it as perfectly true. Professor Rogers spoke of homes. That very word home; sweet-smelling, wholesome, pure; the word which brings, other things being equal, a flush of pride and pleasure to the cheeks of the most unemotional of the vast majority of well-to-do folk, is a misnomer as applied to those ill-smelling foul dens, the atmosphere laden with minute organisms destructive to health and ultimately to life itself; laden, too, with the hideous and lurid vernacular of their in-dwellers.

Professor Rogers was right. The serf in the Middle Ages knew that his life was at the mercy of his lord, knew that his wife and his daughter might have to relinquish to that lord that which is more than life; and to live under the ban of such risks was without doubt very bitter. But the vast majority escaped these dangers, and lived through their uneventful

lives in comparative comfort and content. Between them and the "good-for-nothings" who swarm in our great cities there is a difference in kind, not in degree, for the lives of our urban outcasts are but poor things to take, and the honour of their women a hard thing to seek. Mr. Edwin H. Kerwin, who has lived and worked among the outcasts of East London, that "huge dust-bin," to use his own words, "into which the human rubbish of the whole land empties itself," advocates farm colonies as a cure for the evil. I cordially support him. I have advocated compulsory and labour colonies, not necessarily across the seas, as a cure for the mischief since I first learned to use my pen. Such colonies have succeeded in Germany. In Holland, where there are no poorhouses, and few able-bodied paupers, labour colonies are a part of the national system of government.

I must not however, go beyond my text. I remind myself that I am concerned with things as they are; and outside of the admirable organisations of the Salvation Army and many kindred efforts which are in no sense official, no serious attempt has been made by our rulers to cope with this terrible evil; at all events since the earlier part of the century, when the haphazard system of dumping down our paupers in Canada obtained; a system which, however convenient it might have been from a local point of view, had nothing to commend it from an imperial, that is to say, national point of view; and from a colonial point of view was altogether indefensible at any time,

and in recent years quite impossible. Mr. Kerwin justly says the matter is one which must be grappled with, since slumdom is a curse to London and contributory to other curses. It is the curse of all our great cities, and unhappily it is a curse incident not only to the cities of the Motherland, but is becoming, as time goes on, the curse of the cities of the Empire generally.

Armchair sociologists and politicians are accustomed to dismiss the growth in numbers of the residuum class, in that the growth has not been greater relatively than that of any other class, that it is simply a case of multiplication all round: an extraordinary argument surely, since the happiness which prosperity brings is not heaven, while the misery of the outcasts and vagabonds is hell. Again, can the happiness of a thousand beings be put in the scale against the misery of a unit? Happiness is after all a negative condition; misery is a positive one.

If however, we elect to forget this flotsam and jetsam of society, it would still be something of an over-statement to declare that the condition of all other classes of society has uniformly improved throughout the century. Doubtless if we take the upper middle, the middle and the working classes in the mass, there has been a steady improvement, but within those classes many sections have suffered—the rural landowners, so far as the upper classes go, and the farmers, so far as the middle classes go.

That these classes which had been accustomed to live on the interest of invested capital, have been greatly impoverished by reason of the cheapness of money, or, in other words, the heavy fall in the rate of interest on capital, cannot, of course, be considered as an unmitigated evil, since everything which tends to drive an individual into being a producer, which obliges him to live by the sweat of his brow, instead of by the sweat of his neighbour's brow, must, I suppose, on the whole be held to be conducive to the good of the community. This compulsion however to labour has in itself caused suffering by introducing a number of fresh competitors into professional life, thereby lessening the wage, and sometimes appropriating the very means of subsistence of the original strugglers. But this consideration is involved and to pursue it takes me too far afield. Likewise to specially indicate the various trades that have been ruined by economic causes, the removal of protection, the application of machinery, such as the silk weavers of Spitalfields, to mention a picturesque industry—for it was in the hands of the descendants of its founders, the Huguenot refugees of 1688—would trespass too much on my space.

Looking at the matter broadly, the evidence of growth in the wealth of the nation, here in these islands, is of course overwhelming. Thus the national debt has been reduced from £900,000,000 in 1815 to about £638,000,000 in 1898, and the interest payable has decreased from £30,000,000 to

£25,000,000. Considering the vast increase in the population, the burden of this debt has been greatly lightened since 1815.

The population of Great Britain and Ireland in 1801 was 16⅓ millions, in 1811, about 18½ millions, and in 1821 about 23½. When the Queen came to the throne it was set down at 25,650,000. In 1851 it was upwards of 27½ millions, in 1861, 29½ millions, and in 1871 nearly 32 millions. In 1889, when the Queen had completed fifty years of her reign, it was about 37 millions. At the last census, 1891, it was a little more than 38 millions, and although Sir Robert Giffen's calculation that it would be nearly 45 millions at the end of the century is not likely to be verified, the figures for 1896 being 39½ millions, the total in 1901 may possibly reach 42½ millions. The decrease in the size of families, owing to later marriages, not to mention other social causes which are increasingly operative, and which, if these tendencies continue, will have a very serious effect upon the future of the British race, for numbers must tell, may be held answerable for Sir Robert's miscalculation.

It cannot be denied that high as the ratio of increase in the British race at home still is, it is not so high as it was. I have mislaid the figures I had in readiness, but I remember that Germany now takes the lead, and that Great Britain does not come second on the list, in these comparative statistics of the nations' fecundity. Of course, in such a matter, so

long as a steady increase is maintained, quality counts for much, and what we have to consider is whether the better elements of the British nation are increasing. Despite all that has been said as to the sterilisation of the unfit by natural processes, it is only too clear that the nation is still cumbered by an enormous dead weight, in the shape of criminals, paupers, tramps and vagabonds. This class, to which I have referred in the earlier part of this chapter, is probably recruited, in a very large measure, from without, by the subsidence, so to speak, of the "dregs and feculence" of all other classes, rather than from within by inherent increase. But it will be readily conceded, and those facts connected with the agricultural population must be remembered, that if classes which should remain stationary increase, and those that should increase, decrease, there can be no national gain. Although it is obvious that the restriction in the increase of the British race in the metropolis of the Empire, that is to say, the British Isles, has affected mainly the upper and upper-middle classes, these are the classes, excluding that portion of them which has become effete through over-indulgence, best fitted to carry on the race. It must not be forgotten, in considering this delicate problem, that with the constant raising of the standard of living—and despite the cheapening of most of the necessities and luxuries of life, the increase in the cost of living due to the multiplication of needs and sources of expenditure continues—the upper

classes are the very classes which cannot increase largely with any comfort to themselves, and therefore with any benefit to the nation. Simpler tastes hereafter may simplify the problem; but for the moment we must take comfort from the fact that England has always been an exceedingly democratic country, and that although the ups and downs of fortune have affected families through the course of generations, rather than in one generation as in the case of the United States, yet there has been this constant interchange of social status going on among the people. So it comes about that much of the best blood of England, the best blood, let us say, during the Middle Ages, is now to be found in the veins of the humbler middle-class families, and even in those of field labourers and mechanics, while much of the aristocracy of the day has apparently sprung from nowhere; though close examination of facts often shows that what is dismissed as the vapourings of venal heralds, is true enough in the main, and that the self-made family is after all only reverting to the position of its ancestors. Having touched bottom, the rebound has come, and the qualities which enabled these ancestors to rise, re-appear in descendants more or less remote.

From this we may hope that so long as the backbone of the country, the self-respecting classes, keep up fairly well to the old ratio of increase, there is not much fear for the future of the race, always supposing that some check can be de-

vised to keep the rural population from flocking into the towns. So far the middle classes—a somewhat misleading term, but as used here, intended to denote the shopkeeping class, the higher artisan, and the persons employed in clerical work and so forth—seem to be keeping up the normal rate of increase, but as I have laboured to prove, that will not suffice if "the proud peasantry, the nation's pride," are going to the wall. Apart from that serious aspect of the population question, the statistics of increase would not be disquieting; while as they stand, they may, I suppose, fairly be quoted, as they are constantly quoted, as favourable indices of the continued prosperity of the country, and of its growth in wealth.

The position of Ireland in this matter of wealth and population is peculiar. The inhabitants of Ireland to-day are actually 600,000 less than they were in 1801, over two millions less than in 1821, and over three millions less than in 1831. In 1821 Ireland had 6,802,000 inhabitants; in 1831, 7,767,401; in 1841, 8,175,124. Between 1841 and 1851, that is to say in 1847, the great Potato Famine devastated the island, and in 1851 the population had decreased by over one and a half millions, for in that year it stood at 6,552,000. A further decrease has continued to show itself at the taking of every census since then, the figure for the decadal periods being 5,799,000 for 1861; 5,412,377 for 1871; 5,175,800 for 1881, and 4,704,750 for 1891.

Obviously it has been an advantage to Ireland to

lose a starving people, which the available resources of the country at the time of these outgoings did not permit her to support. That these resources might have been greater had it not been for certain unjust legislation, which in the early part of this century and in many previous centuries crippled and killed Irish industries, I am not called upon to deny. Mr. Mulhall in contrasting the increase of the population in Scotland with the decrease in Ireland says: "In 1841 Scotland had less than one-third of the population of Ireland, whereas at present the two countries are almost equal. The increase in Scotland has been attended with the happiest results, industry and wealth rising by leaps and bounds. At the same time the decline of Ireland has been no less marked, and as the number of inhabitants decreases year by year, so does every useful occupation except the raising of cattle." The exception is a big one. Moreover the comparison between Scotland and Ireland is not a fair one, having regard to the marked divergence in the character of the respective peoples of the two countries. It seems to fair and dispassionate students that the climate, the *genus loci*, must have something to say, far more to say than imaginary political disabilities, to the non-success of Irishmen in Ireland, seeing that in course of time the most virile Scotch and English families resident for a generation or two in that country, assimilate to the Celt, at all events, in that fatal inability of the Celt to make the best of the country. This theory

of climate being responsible, fanciful as it may appear, is really borne out by the fact which must be freely conceded, that Irishmen who have settled in America or the colonies, during the century, have commonly given a very good account of themselves.

Then again it must be remembered that Ireland is not possessed of the great natural resources of England and Scotland, or for that matter of America and the colonies. I cannot pretend to say how far this colonial emigration has benefited Ireland, or to determine what effect it has had upon the United Kingdom and the Empire generally. An examination into this subject would be profitable and interesting, though it bristles with difficulties and apparent contradictions; but this examination would carry me too far afield. It is obvious, in any case, that in a political sense the presence of a large body of disaffected Irishmen in America and in the colonies—though very often the Irishman has become a loyal subject of the Empire in the latter—has been and is fraught with very grave inconveniences, losses and dangers. The advocates of Home Rule for Ireland, a measure, the discussion of which merely, entailed a terrible loss of time and energy on the Kingdom and the Empire, maintain that the menace to the Empire of disaffected Ireland, at home, abroad and in the colonies, should speak trumpet-mouthed in favour of the measure. To which Englishmen candidly answer that they cannot risk the experiment, though obviously when the time is ripe for the

adoption of a general scheme of federal union between England and the colonies, the problem of how to satisfy the aspirations of Irishmen, not for national but for local autonomy, will be much easier of solution.

I have wandered from my immediate text. It is impossible to be sure what the giant theme I have undertaken to treat, does and does not include. Properly it includes almost every subject under the sun; but certainly it should include some reference to the determined effort of the Irish to force Great Britain, during the last two decades of the century, to grant prematurely a measure which as the Empire solidifies and possesses some semblance of fiscal homogeneity and a working system of co-ordinate defence, will more likely than not find itself accepted as a matter of course, as, in fact, a part of that general extension of local control within the confines of the British Isles themselves, that decentralisation of government, that is to say, which must go hand in hand with federal centralisation as its natural sequence or corollary. This premature effort to force Home Rule on the British Parliament—clearly the times were not, and are not, ripe for it—has, as I have said, cost the United Kingdom and indeed the Empire dear. It is impossible to say how dear. Wasted energy, wasted time; the coach of state has stuck again and again in the ruts made by this abortive and monstrous scheme.

There I must leave the subject. It is not possible

to give all the subjects germain to the growth of the Empire, proper and individual treatment. I must refer to many in passing where and when I can. Whether or not the political discontent of Ireland has contributed largely to its loss of population, it is impossible to say; but it is certain that Ireland has not grown richer with the decrease of its people, as it is certain that England and Scotland have grown richer with the increase of theirs. The fact that the population of Scotland has not increased so rapidly as that of England, is in a measure due to the large number of Scotchmen who have come South and settled in England. The increase in both Kingdoms, England and Scotland, has been, as we have already seen, mainly in the industrial population, which has meant an increase in the wealth, if hardly—other things being equal, sanitary and medical science have done much for the health of the people—in the health of the community.

A few figures in addition to those already given will suffice to show how wide and extensive this increase in wealth has been. Sir Robert Giffen's elaborate figures, which need not be quoted here, go to show that the average income of the people has increased vastly in recent years, and with it accumulated national wealth. The probate returns between 1891 and 1896 show that England has an average wealth per head of something like £350, Scotland £263 and Ireland £142. He (Sir Robert) estimates the average increase of wealth at 140 millions yearly.

As a proof, among others, of the extraordinary change that has taken place in the distribution of wealth in England and Scotland, we find that whereas in 1840 farming capital represented nearly a half of the entire wealth of the United Kingdom, in 1896 it was only 14 per cent. of the total wealth of England and 21 per cent. of Scotland, and since then this rate has tended to diminish yearly. In Ireland, on the other hand, agricultural wealth is 60 per cent. of the total wealth of the community.

Those who see in this change in the occupations of the people nothing but good, are accustomed to point to the fact that the people of these islands are housed doubly as well as they were in 1837, and that while the people of Great Britain are the best housed in Europe, the Irish are nearly the worst. The fact remains that a rural people can thrive physically, while they are unquestionably infinitely happier, in habitations which in crowded cities would be noxious and fever-breeding hovels. The secret of the whole matter is fresh air and expanse. It is, however, a pertinent fact that building has progressed four times as quickly as the population in Great Britain. Notwithstanding this, the question of the housing of the poor is still one demanding the most earnest attention. I shall have something to say upon this problem later.

To return to the statistics of wealth as they specially affect Ireland. In the 62 years between 1833 and 1895, England quadrupled her wealth and

Scotland trebled hers, but the wealth of Ireland declined by 100 millions, that is to say, it was estimated at £750,000,000 in 1833 as against £650,-000,000 in 1895. Still, and this is a highly significant fact, which even Mr. Mulhall, though he never loses an opportunity of emphasising the wrongs and griefs of Ireland, is compelled to admit, although Ireland has lost 40 per cent. of her population since 1833, the ratio of wealth to each inhabitant has increased from £95 to £142. From this I think one is fairly permitted to argue that the existing population of the country is better proportioned to the resources of the land and to the energies of the people, than the larger population in the early part of the century.

Sir Robert Giffen bases such of his statistics of wealth as are deduced from the income tax returns on the actual assessments, which were £270,000,000 in 1837 and £630,000,000 in 1887. In 1896 this amount was £706,000,000, and at the end of the century something like 100 millions more. But Mr Mulhall, with quiet cynicism, boldly assumes that the assessment returns only represent half the actual earnings of people falling under the ban of the income tax. This authority seems to have satisfied himself; I do not pretend to say whether he is right or wrong, that the average income for England is £40 a year, for Scotland £31, and for Ireland £17. Mr. Mulhall himself says that it is not safe to depend upon these figures, since many wealthy landowners

and others belonging to Scotland and Ireland, pay income tax in London, although only residing there during a part of the year. This indefatigable statistician, in his *Industries and Wealth of Nations,* shows that the total earnings of the three kingdoms in 1894 were in agriculture 138 millions, in manufactures 525 millions, in commerce 830 millions, and in the professions and various callings 430 millions, a total of £1,423,000,000, which when subdivided shows an average income of £38 per head in England, £45 in Scotland and £20 in Ireland.

It would seem that since 1840 the proportion of persons above the reach of want has increased materially; for at the end of the century the percentage of adults dying leaving property exceeding £100, was probably well over 15 per cent. of the whole, whereas in 1840 it was only 6¼ per cent., and at the beginning of the century the ratio was lower still. The removal of taxation from the working classes, for that is of course the meaning of the abolition of the imposts on imported food, has imposed a heavier relative burthen on the upper and middle classes. Taken in the bulk these classes, always excepting the unhappy landowners and farmers, and certain sections of the professional classes, have been well able to bear this increased incidence of taxation, for we find both classes have grown in wealth. Unhappily no scheme of taxation or forfeiture has yet been devised whereby the great and growing evil associated with the nation's wealth, its tendency to revert into the hands

of an exceedingly small group of plutocrats, who enjoy a kind of unwritten right to exact the first-fruits of the industry of the nation, may be checked. All such schemes are confronted by threadbare old heresies and shibboleths of a time-worn political economy, and cheap nonsense about confiscation and the check on personal effort and energy. I cannot do battle with these specious arguments now. The subject is of course a politico-social one into which it is impossible to enter, but no patriot can witness this growing evil without grave concern, not to say alarm. The wealth of some of the ancient houses of England is associated with huge responsibilities and hereditary duties. It plays its part wholesomely and naturally in the life and progress of the nation. The man who owns it, though he may live in a palace, is commonly as simple in his life and personal expenditure as the ordinary country gentleman, or moderately successful man of business. Not so the millionaires of yesterday, who, endowed with financial genius, to give the quality which they possess its euphemistic name, having acquired by those peculiar methods at which they are past masters, the hard earnings of the masses, are generally no less scrupulous in spending the money which is legally though not morally theirs, than they were in amassing it; with the result that as in its amassment a serious injury was done to the community, even deadlier injuries are inflicted on the people, during the processes of its dissipation.

Throughout the Victorian Era, especially toward the last years of the century, no greater social evil has overtaken the community than the advent of this race of plutocrats. The huge fortunes made in large national undertakings, in shipping, in railways, in commerce, have doubtless been hurtful enough; since the congestion of wealth and its reversion to the few must be hurtful to the many. But the greater part of the huge fortunes of modern days have not been made in great and healthful enterprises, but in the unfair control of markets, and all those shameless manipulations by which rings and monopolies have stolen the people's earnings, or by those no less shameless foistings of useless and inferior goods upon the people, and the employment of that much abused vehicle advertisement for the purpose.

During the century the revenue of the United Kingdom has varied considerably. I have already stated that according to trustworthy statistics the war with France cost the country the enormous sum of £2,000,000,000 sterling. The greater part of this money was raised and expended during those years, but a considerable portion of it was added on to the National Debt, which stood at £900,000,000 at the conclusion of the war. A certain moiety of this huge sum was already in existence when the French war began; legacies from the wars of the previous hundred years. The debt practically began with William III., and it stood at £248,000,000 in 1793.

It seems incredible to us to-day that so far back as 1813, when the population of the British Islands was less than 19 millions, and the accumulated wealth and current wealth of the Kingdom was not a tithe of what it is to-day, the national expenditure reached the extraordinary total of £108,397,645, of which £68,748,363 were raised by taxation and £39,640,-282 by loans. In 1897–8, the expenditure of the Mother Country was just under £107,000,000 and in 1898–9 it amounted to £108,336,193. Some idea can be gleaned from these figures—the fact that in 1813 the country spent about one and a half millions more than it did in 1898, and rather more than in 1899—of the enormous sacrifices the Twenty Years' War entailed on the people. The marvel is how the taxes were paid; but they were paid, and so long as Napoleon was unchecked they were paid cheerfully enough by the vast majority of the nation. It is a splendid record of national spirit and an object lesson to Englishmen at this moment.

At the end of the war the debt amounted to £45 a head of the population; to-day it is £15 or less per head, while the total amount is going on the road to extinction, or rather it was doing so, though it is possible some temporary check may be put on that process by the events transpiring as I write. I had written in my original draft of this volume, that if no hostile conditions or untoward circumstances abroad, or civil disaster at home should overtake us, it might be assumed that by 1950 the debt would have

shrunk to very shallow proportions. It now costs the country something under £25,000,000 annually, considerably less than a quarter of the total expenditure, whereas in the first years of Her Majesty's reign, the interest on the National Debt was considerably more than half the national revenue. In normal times the debt is reduced by about 8 millions annually; and this though throughout the Queen's reign, or the greater part of it, the imperial taxes have been constantly lightened. But as Sir Robert Giffen has remarked, while national taxation has greatly decreased, local taxes have materially increased. Roughly they are three times what they were when Her Majesty came to the throne. Nevertheless, even so, to quote Sir Robert, "the rate of taxes was not increased . . . there is a largely increased property to bear the burden . . . and if the burden is new, the community gets the benefit in better education, better drainage and sewage, and in gas and water and those improvements which the greater concentration of people in large towns renders necessary. The taxation is to some extent a deduction from the property in houses which the community meanwhile has acquired. Without the improvements the property would not be so valuable as it is."

Now it is a trite commonplace of almost every daily journal and almost every platform orator to ascribe our national progress to the adoption of Free Trade. It is argued that if we had not been

able to feed our people cheaply and well, we could not have reared the great industrial community which is the backbone of our national prosperity. From this general proposition it is not necessary to dissent. Nevertheless it is to be questioned whether the increase in the output of coal, and its employment in the form of steam as a motive force, have not as much to say to the matter as the adoption of Free Trade. I will not pursue this vexed question. Certainly it is not very amusing to our landed proprietors to be told that England's prosperity rests on the cheap loaf, since if that be so, they can but ruefully reflect that the bulk of the manufacturing population has not only been fed at their expense, but has actually been created at their expense; in other words that the very existence of this class is in a large measure to be regarded as the corollary of their own ruin. To use the language of Mr. Rider Haggard, in that lively book of his, *A Farmer's Year,* the dwellers in towns, "subsisting on foreign produce, imagine that to them the prosperity or ruin of British land is a matter of indifference, affecting only some few tens of thousands of the owners of the soil in whose future they are not concerned, whereas the gradual depopulation of the country districts is likely to bring about national consequences of the gravest character." I have, I know, already dwelt, more than once, upon this danger and evil; but, as it seems to me, its importance and urgency justify some repetition and demand from anyone

attempting to sum up the pros and cons of national progress during the century, the fullest recognition and insistence, for if this constant drain on the agricultural population is not checked, I am persuaded that all our progress will count for nothing, and that our ruin as a people is inevitable.

Meanwhile it is permissible to make the most of that progress, since we have paid and are paying for it at so ruinous a cost. The glorifiers of this material progress dwell upon this increase in the output of coal and iron, and of all the various industries and manufactures resulting therefrom—cotton, wool, the textile manufactures generally—untroubled by the thought that the day may come when we shall be unable to compete with countries possessing coal and iron resources ten times as extensive as our own. So far as the century goes, so far as the present movement goes, there is no sign of any serious setback. Our foreign trade has reached enormous proportions. Our exports to foreign countries exceed in value £200,000,000 annually, whereas at the beginning of the century they were probably less than 30 millions, seeing that the total exports, including India and the colonies, are set down at 34½ millions. At that time the imports from foreign countries only amounted to about 15 millions, nearly a similar total representing the imports from India, the West Indies and a few other colonies. Now the imports from foreign countries amount to upwards of £360,000,000, in other

words, they are twenty-four times what they were at the beginning of the century. Of course this result is largely due to the fact that England alone of all the countries of the world, offers a free market to the foreigner.

For the rest we might heap up figures in columns and fill page after page, all telling the same tale, all supplying conclusive evidence of the remarkable prosperity of the country. No doubt these figures are impressive enough, but however impressive, however much we may be satisfied with our colossal wealth and our astonishing progress, certain considerations of cost have to be taken into account, considerations we are exceedingly prone to forget, but of which we may be sure our continental rivals and critics take careful and gratified note, expectant of the time when the account shall be presented against us in their favour.

CHAPTER X.

"THE GOOD OLD TIMES.

The past exercises a potent spell over the minds of imaginative folk. It requires imagination of a high order and a great measure of faith, to be keenly interested in the future. The future, save in the sense that every man lives in his descendants, is beyond us; we are removed from it by the phenomenon of death. Yet the men who have founded families and planted empires, in doing what they did, have lived in the future, that is to say, the future beyond their own existence. For them the progress of their own particular race, either in a family or a national sense, in the days to come, when as they knew it was more than likely they themselves would not so much as exist as a memory, even as a name, was a matter of the utmost importance. The most virile sections of the human family invariably fall under the spell of this form of descendant-worship. Still the past is, in a direct and tangible sense, a more actual possession with the living than the future can ever be. History, tradition, personal narrative, all combine to give it shape and reality; its monuments are before our eyes; its

records confront us wherever we go. It has concrete existence.

Also from an æsthetic point of view the past has infinite charm. In a physical sense the lapse of time beautifies the ugly, and adds to the beauty of the beautiful. No spick and span building fresh from the mason's hands can compare in interest, suggestion and poetry with the historic ruins of the world. So, too, as we advance from any social, political and domestic order of things, we are apt to lose sight of all in them that was harsh, ugly and unjust, and to remember only what was—or possibly only now appears to us to have been—attractive and agreeable. The feudal times are supposed to have been the age of chivalry; but it is quite obvious, when we come to examine into the matter, that chivalry was rarer then than it is to-day. Similarly the days of the Georges, and the early Victorian days have a great charm for those among us who are too young to have touched the first through our parents, or to have experienced the second in our own persons.

That the conditions of life were hard enough in all our colonies during the early part of the century, every one would be prepared to admit; though the glamour through which those days are viewed, especially by Englishmen belonging to the Motherland, is perhaps more deceptive than in the case of Great Britain herself. Mr. Theal, the historian of South Africa, has painted for us a vivid picture of

life in that colony during the early part of the century. "The ordinary conveniences of life," says Mr. Theal, "were obtainable in and about Cape Town, and were enjoyed by most of the whites; but on the lone farms in the interior, comfort, as it is understood now-a-days, was an unknown word. The hovels in which the graziers lived, seldom contained two rooms, frequently only one. They were destitute of the most ordinary furniture. The great waggon-chest which served for a table as well as a receptacle for clothing, a couple of camp-stools and a kartel or two (wooden frames with a network of strips of raw-hide stretched across them) were the only household goods possessed by many." Crockery was absent, so were knives and forks. Clothing and blankets were made of skins; a gun, ammunition and a waggon were the squatters' only possessions, save a few cotton goods for shirts, and clothing for the women; hats, coffee and sugar were about the only other articles the Boer ever thought of purchasing. There was no poverty, but on the other hand the standard of life was scarcely higher than that of the savages over whom the Boers exercised almost absolute control, and from whom the chief point of difference was the strong religious feeling which characterised the Dutchmen.

Under British rule this primitive condition of affairs gradually gave way; and indeed it is certain that still earlier a sprinkling of families, even in the up-country districts, maintained a much higher

standard of living. Witness the old country houses at the Paarl, Stellenbosch and elsewhere. Again it is a well-known fact that Mr. Cecil Rhodes' agents obtained some extremely handsome pieces of old Dutch furniture for that statesman's mansion at Groot Schuur, in remote parts of the colony. Doubtless many of these were removed from the more populous districts and towns later than the first few years of the century. In the main, then, Mr. Theal's account is accurate enough. Civilisation centred around Cape Town, extending to the Paarl, Stellenbosch, and in a lesser degree to Worcester, Tulbagh and Malmesbury. For the nearest approach to-day to the conditions of life portrayed by the Cape historian as those obtaining in the up-country districts during the early days of British occupation, we must go to the "Poor Whites" of Cape Colony. These unhappy creatures, how to deal with whom constitutes one of the greatest social problems of the colony at this moment, are the outcome of a bad system of education, and a doubtful system of land inheritance, under which at the death of a proprietor, his property is equally divided among his children. Division and subdivision through a half-dozen or a half-score generations results in an inheritance being whittled down to a few square yards, and this is commonly mortgaged up to the hilt, to the "cute" man of the neighbouring *dorp*. On this little patch the descendants of the owner of wide acres insist on living, or rather existing. Manual labour

has always been the badge of inferiority; the portion of the black man. The Poor White is too proud to work, and too stupid to learn, and his lot is a pitiable one.

As to Australia, although during the early years of the century it made some progress in agriculture —and at that time New South Wales was the only Australian colony, for Victoria was not formed into a distinct colony until a few years before Her Majesty came to the throne—it cannot be said of the continent generally that it was a desirable place to live in, until the century had run many years of its course. Governor Hunter introduced sheep from the Cape, and under his six or seven years' rule the colony made decided progress; but the labour of convicts is never satisfactory; and the New South Wales Corps, which practically ruled the roost, debauched the emancipated convicts and immigrants with rum, and generally indulged in all manner of rowdyism and misconduct. When General Macquarie succeeded to the government in 1810, he described the colony in very gloomy terms as barely emerging from "infantile imbecility," and as suffering from various privations and disabilities. He further said that the country was impenetrable beyond forty miles from Sydney, that agriculture was in a languishing state, that there was no revenue, and that the population in general was depressed by poverty, and in the lowest state of debasement and neglect; religion at a discount, roads impassable, public buildings col-

lapsing, and famine imminent. Through such troublous times Australia passed before the discovery of gold and its systematic exploration, which may be said to date from the middle of the century. Gold gave the necessary stimulus to its fortunes, of which pastoral pursuits may be said to be the solid foundation.

Canada, as we understand the term now, was a comparatively small affair at the beginning of the century; though it was founded more than a hundred years earlier than the Cape, and two and a half centuries earlier than New South Wales. When the century opened, the populous portions of Canada were already in the enjoyment of a considerable degree of prosperity, both in Upper and Lower Canada, although these legislative divisions, which had practically effected the isolation of the English from the French population, did not eventuate in that increase of harmony which had been hoped from the measure. This, however, is a political issue with which I am not directly concerned. It may be admitted at once that the conditions of life in Canada were on the whole less strenuous and exacting, from the point of view of material well-being, than those which obtained in other portions of our nascent Empire, due mainly to the fact that the country had been settled longer, and that it was settled by persons of very much higher social and intellectual status than those who colonised Australia; while if it be admitted that a certain percentage of the original

Dutch and French colonisers of South Africa were of as high a grade, socially and mentally, as the French and English colonisers of Canada, it must be remembered that the South African colonists suffered deterioration as the result of their practical isolation, whereas the continent of America lived and moved and had its being not apart from, but allowing for the difficulties of communication, in actual contact and association with the hub and progress of the Old World.

So far as the West Indies are concerned, it is only too true that their prosperity, built up as it was upon slave labour, and upon its sugar industry, has never survived the freeing of the slaves, and the high protective tariff on sugar imposed by foreign countries. The landowners of Jamaica were for the most part absentee-proprietors, and the islands can scarcely be regarded as colonies in the true sense of the word, though of course they are not essentially dependencies of the Empire—they are Crown Colonies and quasi-Crown Colonies—in the sense that India and the Straits Settlements are. Jamaica is none the less a part of the British Empire, and as such it is not agreeable to have to record that from the earliest days of the century until the present time it has been gradually declining in prosperity; nor is there the slightest prospect of any improvement until the British Government rises to that true conception of its duties as the government, not merely of the United Kingdom in the exclusive interests of

that Kingdom, but of the United Empire in the collective interests of that Empire.

I have purposely dealt with the condition of the peoples of the British colonies at the beginning of the century, before examining into the condition of the people of the United Kingdom, because the progress in material comfort and well-being of the latter has been largely reflected in the colonies, which apart on the one hand from local causes, such as native wars and inter-racial and intercolonial jealousies, causes which have exercised for the most part a deterrent influence on progress, and on the other of the discoveries of precious stones and metals, which on the whole have made for progress, the growth and advancement of the colonies have resulted from the growth and advancement of the United Kingdom. The pages which have preceded this, certainly contain no lack of data as to the sources of this growth, and in succeeding ones it will fall to me to show how the employment of steam and electricity as means of communication between man and man, has tended to diffuse the gains of brain and sinew throughout the Empire, even into its furthest extremities.

Before attempting a detailed picture of the changes resulting from these potent causes, I intend to adduce certain evidence—it comes from a source I know to be unimpeachable—of the extraordinary improvement in those conditions of life which most narrowly affect the poorer classes of the people of

the United Kingdom, and especially in its rural districts, which have chanced to come under my notice. Some time since—it was during the last days of 1897 and the earlier days of 1898—the editor of a county journal, the *West Sussex Gazette,* conceived the idea of inviting the labouring classes of Sussex, Kent, Surrey and Hampshire to give their impressions of the difference between the early days of the century and the present time. The invitation resulted in the reception of as valuable a batch of human documents as ever came into an editor's possession. One by one the members of the "Old Guard" (as these deponents were called) gave their evidence, and almost to a man stoutly declared that so far from the old days being good, they were exceedingly bad as compared with the present time. It must be remembered that all these witnesses, in writing of their birth and boyhood, are writing of a time of abnormal depression, when England was reduced to a condition of exhaustion by reason of the enormous cost of the French war.

"Before Free Trade," says one humble deponent, "sugar was 7d. per lb., tea was 5d. an ounce and bread was very dear at all times, sometimes wheat was £20 a load, and I have known it £35 a load, but not lasting for long. Our wages were 6s. to 9s. a week, and we could not get work half our time. We lived on potatoes. They wore round frocks if we could get us one. Now, gentlemen, I am going to thank you kindly for good deeds you have done for

us in taking the duty off tea and malt and sugar and bread."

Another writes that he was a head carter at 8s. 1d. a week. "Women used to help then on the farm as well as men. There used to be 18 females at a time dragging a drag rake and now they have horses. At that time there was a prize given for bringing up your family without going to the parish, and I had £3 and my wife only had eleven in family. Fresh butter was 9d. to 10d. a lb., now it varies from 1s. 1d. to 1s. 5d. Tea was 5s. a lb., now we get it for a shilling. Coarse salt was from 16s. to a guinea a bushel in my young days. Loaf sugar 8d. a lb., and moist 4d. to 6d. per lb. I have paid 1s. 4d. for a letter to go from Petersfield to the Isle of Wight. I had 5 miles a day to walk for my schooling."

The statements as to the price of tea, sugar, salt, raisins and currants, and the ordinary necessities of life, as the labourer regards them to-day, all go to show that on the average these commodities cost three times as much in the early part of the century as they do to-day. Sussex roads were proverbially bad, but now they are on the whole excellent. One witness testifies that he had to wade through two miles of deep mud to get to a hard road which was "Oakley Stone Street or the old Roman Road." In many counties of England these old Roman roads were the only decent thoroughfares. "A carrier's van," writes one old Sussexian, "went to Rudgwick

twice a week. Think of Monday, at about 10 or 11 o'clock, cramped up in that van until 5 or 6 o'clock on Tuesday."

From another member of the "Old Guard" we learn that when he was a boy, the roads were all so bad the carters were obliged to walk over in the fields to drive the horses. "The horses were up to their knees in mud and water." An old fellow of 80 tells what the first local motives (sic) were like. "The first ride I had, the carriages were like the bullock trucks of the present day. Then for a time the third-class carriages were something better, but open at the sides and wind enough to blow you out of the window. . . . Wages are double to what they were then. Some articles of food are nearly half the price they were then. In our church services they used to have the bassoon, or at best a barrel organ to lead the singing."

Rather a sombre shadow on the progress of modern times is thrown by a bailiff who had brought up 15 children; in referring to the improvement in education he says every one of his boys can beat him. But he adds sententiously, "Boys get so well educated that they won't look at hard work." This is an aspect of education as affecting progress in the agricultural districts to which I must refer in detail later. It is sad to think that all our village looms are still; that the handicrafts which used to thrive in every village have become extinct. The wood carver and stone carver who have left their mark

on church, manor house, cottage and in the churchyard of the towns and hamlets of Old England, have been replaced by a stereotyped person from the great cities. The artistic and inventive talent of each locality has been stamped out, and men are reduced to mere automata. This in any case cannot mean an increase of happiness, or of real prosperity. The joy in performance, in work done as well as it could be done, has gone, and each man hurries to get through his appointed task which he rushes through indifferently, anxious to be free to "enjoy himself" in some *banal* and senseless amusement which, if he only knew it, bores him far more than his despised daily toil.

To revert to agriculture, pure and simple. Mr. Rider Haggard has recently declared that he is at a loss to procure experienced ploughmen and trenchers for the small acreage, less than 400 acres, he farms in Norfolk; and that even a good milker is becoming a rarity in the land. Again there is the fact bluntly stated by the old bailiff of Lavington in the *West Sussex Gazette*, that "boys get so well educated they won't look at work." This awkward fact is responsible for the awkward truth that we pay away millions of pounds yearly to the little culturists of the continent for fruit, and no less a sum for eggs. And yet at the beginning of the century (and even now this is the case in some parts of England, Devonshire for instance, but there is no agency for collecting them) new-laid eggs were

sold at the rate of 28 for a shilling. An octogenarian declares that he went to work at six years old woodcutting; and *at nine* was sold under the hammer, similar to an auction sale, and was obliged to stay in the one place for a certain period. "When I left, the master gave me sixpence for my year's service." Nevertheless he got education enough, probably from the National School, though he does not say so, to become parish clerk in after life. He had been in that capacity for forty years when he volunteered this evidence, but strangely enough education had no friend in him. "Too much education for the working man and woman," he says, "makes them idle, wanting to get their living without work." He then proceeds to deliver a homily on the management of children who now "want to be over their elder ones, and do not seem to understand the word 'obey.' When I was five years old, I had six months' schooling. But I managed to read fairly well, and write a little."

The wonderful change in dress employs the pens of some of these witnesses. "The round smock was the garb for men, the blue print dress and red cloak and coal scuttle bonnet and a pair of pattens with rings as big as saucers and about three inches wide to go to church, was the Sunday best of the women. Now," continues this critic of modern manners, "it must be all the colours of the rainbow, with hats adorned with feathers and heaven knows what, for I don't." As to dress, I can bring evidence to bear

upon this from a higher social scale. Only a few days before her death, which took place recently, a lady of good family, the daughter of an army officer, and the widow of a colonel in the Grenadier Guards, who had passed her 98th year, informed me that in her younger days, girls had two bonnets at the most and two dresses and a shawl, and were quite contented to keep them for years. If women were not so fashionable in those days, no wonder matrimony was more so.

That they made things more substantially at the beginning of the century than now is unhappily too true, but few would be prepared for such conclusive evidence of the fact as that supplied by a Sussex yokel, who declares that he uses to-day an umbrella given to his mother on her marriage in 1806. "I used to carry it," he writes, "when four or five years old to the grocer's shop on little errands." He expresses a strong conviction that there is plenty of work for every man to do, "if he chooses to do it. They are better paid now in general," he writes, "than they were 60 or 70 years ago. Unionism I do not like; it only encourages lazy brainless muffs to get the same wages as a good workman. There is plenty of food, and much cheaper than in days gone by. The present time is the best I have ever seen for old and young." Evidently George Artell regards the end of the century as the Golden Age.

An old man who was born in the parish of Warnham at about the time his fellow parishioner, Percy

Bysshe Shelley left it for good, testifies to the scarcity of work in his youth, necessitating labourers taking it in turn to work at anything that was going on alternate weeks. It is only fair to note this, as it shows the villages can be, and have been, too full of labourers. "There was no cricket, no football, no amusement," writes this Warnham man, "and only one day in the year, the Club day, when the villagers had any fun. The parish owned the cottages, and often put several families into one cottage, but they only allowed one bedroom for a family, and downstairs one family would live in the kitchen, and another in the wash-house, and one in the parlour." It may be remarked that this state of affairs and worse now obtains largely in crowded cities, despite the increase in buildings. "We had to live," says this witness in conclusion, "much harder lives than now, and we are looked after much better." Such evidence as this—for the circumstances and facts narrated must have passed beneath his eyes daily—throws a strong light on the poet Shelley's fervid diatribes on the oppression of the people, and their selfish exploitation as so much flesh and blood to be hired at the smallest cost; and explains the fierce denunciation of the landowners which fills so many of his earlier poems.

A farm labourer in his 88th year, who had worked on one farm for 60 years, somewhat quaintly summarises the changes he had seen in his village during those years. "Four changes at the farm, five at

the church, four at the grocer's shop, and ten at the village inn." The village inn is death to its landlord, as I have myself observed; and until an inn gets into the hands of a woman, widow or daughter of a previous holder, length of tenure in the hands of one person is rare. This witness further testifies that he had often been a night watchman in the churchyard to ward off the approach of body-snatchers, "especially after the burial of a wealthy person."

"I think," says another of the Old Guard, "I never knew our neighbourhood (Ashington, near Worthing) in such a prosperous state as it is at the present day, and I am quite sure that it is a great deal more religious than it was when I was a young man." A Worthing fisherman, in his 87th year, declares that, "Just after Waterloo, bread was 7d. to 8d. the 2 lb. loaf, and everything else was from four to five times as dear as it is now. Now a man with 5s. a week is better off than he would be with 30s. a week when I was a young man, and he can earn a pound a week and a good deal more." We have not yet done with these letters. There are scores of them, and in my opinion their worth is beyond all price. One correspondent tells of child labour, the unhappy youngsters sent to sweep chimneys in the early days of the century, and that most people one met were pitted with smallpox, which fact calls to mind that the progress in medical science and especially in sanitary and surgical science, and

the enormous increase in proportion to population of physicians and surgeons, have greatly added to the health and happiness of the people. Other countrymen give descriptions of the riots arising from the introduction of steam threshing machines; of the economic changes resulting from substitution of coal for wood, and matches for the tinder-box; of the newspaper costing 7d. and Moore's Almanac 2s. 7d.; of the casual way the dead were interred, and so forth. "Young men," declares a veteran of 95, "were a sight worse off when I went to work at 8 years old. Now they get better wages, better clothes, work shorter time and easier, and get more holidays. I know because I have been a labouring man all my days, and from 1812 to 1888 I never had a day's illness, and now I am 95."

It will be seen that those members of the rural working class who are old enough to judge, declare with almost unanimous voice that the conditions of life have vastly improved since the battle of Trafalgar was fought, though some of these shrewd observers are acute enough to remember that there is a reverse side to the shield, and that all this progress has not been achieved without entailing sacrifices—losses here and retrogression there. One old housewife says sententiously, "Wages were not so good, but men were more satisfied." If this be true, and it is to be feared it is only too near the truth, there can have been little gain, since content is the only road to

happiness, and this, for all its progress, is the most discontented age the world has ever known, and assuredly little of its discontent is divine. A careful witness of 80, while giving full weight to all that makes for progress, roundly declares, "When I was 21 the people were better off; I am satisfied they were. The commons were open, and lots of people could keep their pigs, cows and poultry. The holdings were so small, if a man offended one holder he was able to get work with another. Almost the poorest had their pig, but very little fresh meat." But James Dudley of Coldharbour declares he could not afford to keep a pig, for salt was 3s. 6d. a gallon, and it would cost 12s. to salt it down. His case must have been general. The complaint that the commons have been illegally enclosed, "jumped," as they would say in South Africa, and diverted from their original purpose, is only too true, and the fact is a sad reproach to the landowners. There are places in Sussex where the very name of the village or hamlet denotes the existence of a green, Buck's Green for instance, but where not a vestige of the "green" remains. Finally, the pessimist I have quoted, declares that the condition of morals is worse than it was, a state of affairs he somewhat arbitrarily sets down to short service in the army.

As to whether James Maidment of Graffham is right in his opinion that morals have deteriorated, or whether a witness I previously quoted is right in

stating that the people are far more religious than formerly, something must be said later, but it may be said at once that, paradoxical as it may appear, each contention is right, while each is wrong. So far, however, as the evidence of these veterans goes, and it goes very far indeed, no one will deny, taking it *en bloc,* that it supplies unanswerable evidence of an immense improvement in the social condition of the people since the beginning of the century. This evidence has been quoted at some length because I was immensely struck with it when it was first brought under my notice. Its worth is incalculable. Tons of statistics could not pretend to be nearly so valuable as these simple annals of the poor. They deal exclusively with the condition of the population still retained in the rural districts. The whole bearing and significance of the facts would be lost were hurried thinkers to deduce from them a justification for the policy which is gradually emptying the country of its labourers. Given reasonable economic conditions instead of having less land under cultivation than at the beginning of the century, double or three times the land might be turned to account. The comparative happiness of this remnant of the rural peasantry is only remotely due to the removal of competitive conditions, and there is room on the land for three times the labourers, all of whom might be as prosperous relatively as the agricultural labourer of to-day. Eighteen shillings a week in a town, with its high rents, and its incessant inducements to ex-

penditure, is not equal to twelve shillings a week in the country, with its low rents and pure air. It has been admitted already that it is only the reduction in the price of the necessities of life which has brought many things which their ancestors regarded as luxuries, within reach of the pastoral population, but that the exodus of that population to the towns has done as much. We may also admit that the exceedingly evil consequences resulting from the crowding of the people into great cities have been minimised by the enormous strides sanitary science has made, and by the determined, but still wholly inadequate efforts of the well-to-do classes,—whose consciences have been awakened, in a large measure, through a lively sense of their own danger,—to improve the normal conditions of life in great towns, by providing better homes for the people, and better and more wholesome food. Moreover, legislative enactments have supplemented the work of charitable organisations; and the task of elevating and humanising the working classes, and the numerous grades between those classes and the indigent poor, has gone on apace.

But facts are hard taskmasters. I have already cited that particularly hard one that after three or four generations of interbreeding in great cities, sterilisation results. It may be open to the philosopher to answer that there is no evil in this, since it is a natural law, which in its workings secures the beneficent result, that the unfit shall cease to cumber the earth, and that the population shall not get

in front of the capacity of the earth to feed the people, and man's capacity to utilise its resources to that end. Mr. Charles Booth, in one of those wonderful books of his which deal with the labour of the people and the condition of the aged poor, and with kindred questions affecting the masses, says, and the assertion is based on the most minute and careful examination of statistics, that the varying ratio of improvement in the condition of the people coincides with the degrees of general progress and prosperity, and that since, happily, the country has been steadily growing in prosperity, the people have everywhere grown less poor. "If we compare," he adds, "pauperism generally with the movement of population, it appears that not only is the rate of pauperism much higher where population has decreased, but the rate of improvement is much lower." This is true, he says, everywhere except in London. The statement is unimpeachable, though it is somewhat startling at first sight, and of course cannot be taken as applying to the movements of population stretching over a century. Nevertheless, when one comes to consider the statement seriously it is found to coincide with the impressions deduced from observations and experience.

The truth is, the glamour of London attracts not only the high-spirited, daring and adventurous from all parts of the kingdom, it also attracts the infirm of purpose, the idle and the dissolute. Being the centre of the world's wealth, it draws to it not only

those men who feel they can work for that wealth and so gain a share of it, but men who hope to gain it without working at all. The men who have the capacity to gain are commonly out of it before their children have grown to man's or woman's estate; the invertebrates remain.

Towards the end of the last century, the poor of England and France had found champions, and the severities of the old Poor Laws had come to be regarded with disfavour in this country, not so much, as Mr. Robert Mackenzie says in his *History of the Nineteenth Century,* because of an enhanced tenderness of feeling toward the poor, but because the results of widespread disaffection were feared. Then it was the Poor Laws were relaxed so completely as actually to offer a premium to idleness; it is in fact the lively appreciation of the evil consequences following on this extraordinary laxity, which makes our statesmen to-day so reluctant to inaugurate a system of old-age pensions—a system, by the way, already operative in New Zealand. In 1782 able-bodied labourers were no longer obliged to enter the poorhouse; money was given them in their homes, and insufficient wages were supplemented from the rates. In 1801, when the population of the United Kingdom did not exceed 16,345,646 souls, and its resources were quite inconsiderable in comparison with its present wealth, £4,000,000 was expended on the relief of the poor, and this sum had doubled itself by 1818. Matters had arrived at such a pass in

many districts, that landowners offered to relinquish their land to the parish in consideration of being relieved from these intolerable rates. In some cases the paupers actually assembled and declared that they would not accept the land of the parish, but would continue under the then existing system. In point of fact, they regarded themselves as possessing an inalienable right to be supported by the owners of the land.

It will be seen, therefore, that a kind of rough and ready, but quite effective system of state socialism actually existed in England in the early part of the century, and that pauperism became, so to speak, hereditary in families. In 1834 an attempt was made to remedy this state of affairs, and for a time with great success. The system of giving out-door relief was abolished. Little by little the guardians reverted to it. Then came another pull up, and to-day the system is strenuously opposed by the authorities on principle; but the guardians being for the most part humane men, who have lived all their lives among the old folk claiming relief, naturally hesitate to condemn their humble neighbours to what they all regard as imprisonment. Hence the expensive system of out-door relief has grown apace together with the rates since the early days of poor-law reform in the thirties. In examining the statistics of poor-law relief one has, however, to be careful, since all manner of charges, not properly coming under the head of poor rates, have been grouped under this

denomination, with the result that the total expenditure on Poor Rates for 1897 is given at £24,761,618. More than half of this sum was expended on the School Board, police, county and borough rates, and half a dozen other objects which cannot with propriety be described as the relief of the poor. Meanwhile there has been an appreciable decline in the number of paupers, for in 1850 they amounted, for the United Kingdom, to 1,308,000, or 48 per 1,000 of the population; in 1870, to 1,279,000, or 41 per 1,000; in 1896 to 1,025,000, or 26 per 1,000. The tendency continues to a decline in the numbers and ratio of pauperism, though the figures fluctuate. Mr. Mulhall points out that we spend twice as much on each pauper as we did in 1850, though the burthen of poor rates on the public is not perceptibly greater, being 72 pence per inhabitant to-day, or thereabouts, as against 68 in 1850. The condition of the people of Ireland, notwithstanding the fact that more than half the population have left their native land during the century, is far less favourable. Since 1870 the number of paupers has risen 34 per cent., while the population has fallen 15 per cent., figures which seem to justify Mr. Charles Booth's conclusions, already quoted; though the fact that the ratio of wealth per head has increased, indicates a contrary conclusion. However, figures, which in a work like this it is necessary to give, but for which I confess I have the smallest respect, since they can be made to prove anything, are delusive in this case,

as in many others. What is more to the point and better worth registering, is the re-assuring fact that the efforts of a considerable body of benevolent men and women to humanise the workhouse are bearing fruit, slowly but surely. The subject is a seductive one for me, holding strongly, as I do, that in any case the veterans of labour, who have done their duty splendidly to the country by rearing large families, and to whom saving was an impossibility, should receive every consideration in their old age. There are scores of ways in which their sad existence could be brightened.

As to the general improvement in living during this century, that is amply proved by the facts adduced in the earlier part of this chapter. During the sixty years or so of Her Majesty's reign, the consumption of meat per head of the population has risen to 110 lbs. from 75 lbs., and of sugar to 88 lbs. from 16 lbs., figures which compare most favourably with similar statistics referring to any foreign country. In 1850, savings bank depositors numbered 39 per 1,000 of the inhabitants, now they reach 203 per 1,000; in fact, there are more depositors than homes; and it may be said that, on the average, at least one member of every family has an account. This is a marvellous increase of thrift among a people still to be accounted extremely thriftless in comparison with any other nation. There has been, too, a wonderful increase in the number of persons insuring their lives, which is, after all, another form of saving.

But with all this progress we still, as Professor Huxley, Mr. Charles Booth, Dr. Barnardo, Lord Meath, Miss Octavia Hill, General Booth, and a thousand other workers for the good of the people, continually proclaim, fall lamentably short of our duty to our neighbour. Mr. George R. Sims' lurid picture of how the poor live in the London slums is unhappily as true to-day as it was when the book was written, as those who have read Mr. Richard Whiteing's vivid and truthful account, cast in fictional guise, of the state of the very poor may know, should actual experience have been denied them. We are exceedingly prosperous, but we let our hospitals languish for want of funds. It will be a revelation to most Englishmen to be told—for we imagine ourselves to be the most humane of peoples—that whereas England has 496 hospitals and 16,400 beds for 145,000 patients, the hospitals of France have 72,000 beds for 438,000 patients. These figures are not absolutely current, though they are recent ones. Despite what Mr. Peabody did, and what Lady Burdett-Coutts, Lord Rowton and many others are doing, we still do less than a quarter we ought to do to provide decent dwellings for the people, to whom the prosperous and comfortable classes owe, and it is scarcely too much to say exclusively owe, the conditions which make it possible for them to enjoy that varying, but on the whole exceedingly high standard of comfort and ease they command.

Obviously the varying prosperity, and in recent

years the steady growth of prosperity in every portion of the United Kingdom—unhappily it is scarcely possible to add Ireland, that distressful country from which prosperity would seem to be permanently estranged—has had a decided influence in many directions upon the growth and development of the Colonies. The development of our manufactures has made a demand upon their raw materials, while the skill and activity of English railway engineers and contractors has transmitted its vitalising energy to remote parts of the Empire, to mention two only of the numerous benefits derivable by our sons and daughters across the seas from the progress of the Motherland. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that easy conditions of life at home have retarded the movement of large masses of people to these limbs of the Empire abroad, where they would have contributed enormously to the strength and stability of Her Majesty's extra-insular dominions.

CHAPTER XI.

COMMUNICATION.

It is safe to say that in no department of human activity and progress during the last hundred years has the change been so marked as in communication. At the beginning of the century, as has been already remarked in the previous chapter, the highways of the United Kingdom were practically confined to the main roads between London and the other large towns; highways supported by tolls levied at frequent turnpikes. The stage coach was practically the only means of communication for passengers, save of course such private means as carriages for the rich and waggons for the poor. What travelling was like then every well-read person knows. The romances of the early part of the century, the diaries of persons of quality, to say nothing of the picturesque literature of to-day which deals retrospectively with the subject, combine to convey to the mind a vivid impression of its manifest inconveniences. As recently as the Christmas of 1898 I chanced to enjoy the advantage of listening to an old lady, then in her 99th year, who gave me many word pictures of journeys from Edinburgh to London, and from London to Bath, as to convince me, as touching stage-coaches,

how greatly distance lends enchantment to the view; and that eager as we are to revive the pleasures of that mode of travelling, continuous journeys, day by day, were fraught with far more disagreeables, even for the possessors of heavy purses, than those associated with third-class railway travelling to-day. Of course in those days, the old-fashioned gallantry of the men contributed, in some measure, to mitigate for the ladies the manifold disagreeables of the road. In the winter male travellers would bring from the posting-houses, steaming bumpers, and by using a judicious method, in which firmness and coaxing had their part, induce the coyest maiden, first to sip and finally to drain the glass to the dregs.

Apart, however, from these little amenities of the road, inland travelling in the early part of the century, even so far as the United Kingdom was concerned, was anything but a charming experience, and such as it was, it was confined almost exclusively to the wealthier classes, or to persons, "bagmen," and their like, whose business obliged them to move about from place to place. Highwaymen gave the zest of danger to the road; the risk of being snowed up or brought to a standstill by the bad condition of the thoroughfare, added to those elements of uncertainty which every traveller had to face. As to the local roads, they, of course, were of the very worst description, and to venture into them, in any vehicle lighter than the farm cart, was to court the fate of Queen Anne and Prince George of Den-

mark, who on their journey from London to visit Petworth in Sussex—though this of course was in the previous century—had to be dragged out of the mud by cart horses, their coach having stuck hopelessly in the ruts. The main roads had, even in Sussex, the latest county to possess decent roads, greatly improved during the eighteenth century, but the shorter thoroughfares continued to be of the kind which delayed Queen Anne's coach for a day and a night in the wilds of the Weald.

Of course the colonies were in a far worse case as to internal communication, than the Motherland. It is not possible to refer in detail to the successive measures which have gradually provided most of our colonies with roads equal to, and in many cases superior to, the highways of the Motherland, since that gradual growth has really been coextensive with the growth of the colonies themselves. But, as in the British Isles, so in the colonies, the application of steam to territorial and aquarian locomotion, is the one invention which actually marks the dividing line between the methods of communication of the nineteenth century and those of previous ages. This invention has simply revolutionised the world, and especially the Anglo-Saxon world.

It was in 1807, and it was in America, that steam was first turned to the purposes of riverain locomotion; a steamer successfully navigating the Hudson from New York to Albany. Some time afterwards steamboats made their appearance on the Clyde, and

growing bolder, began to ply between Glasgow and London, and Holyhead and Dublin. It was not until the second year of the Queen's reign that the Atlantic was crossed by steamships in anything more than a merely tentative manner. In 1819, successful experiments had been made, while Canada can claim to have sent in 1830 the first steamship across the Atlantic. But for nearly twenty years, for all practical purposes, the idea lay dormant, no one appearing to think that steam, as applied to steam navigation, could be largely employed. It was in fact regarded as a curiosity until the successful voyages of the Great Western and Sirius, between England and America, demonstrated its feasibility. Even then, for a long time, steam vessels were mainly used for coasting and passenger traffic. In 1843, the "screw" was successfully employed, and a few years later the Navigation Laws were repealed, the effect of which was to allow, with a few exceptions, foreign vessels free commercial intercourse and equality with the ships of the Mother Country, her colonies and dependencies, throughout the Empire.

It is curious to note that the Shipowners' opposition to this measure, went the length of demanding *that all vessels built in the colonies should be reckoned as foreign,* which shows how far the imperial idea had germinated in 1845, or thereabouts. It chanced that at this time the public mind was greatly exercised at the deterioration in the character of the

British sailor, a condition ascribed to the monopoly which the Navigation Laws had given to the mercantile marine. No doubt the destruction of this monopoly led to a gradual improvement in the status of the sailor, who now had to bring himself abreast of the sailors of other nations; but despite the growth of the British colonies and the further demand for shipping occasioned by the Crimean war, British shipping was in a poor way until the Civil War in America threw a great part of the shipping of the United States into English hands. In 1860 the tonnage of American vessels engaged in the direct trade between England and the States was 2,245,000 tons. This had fallen to 480,000 tons in 1865. British tonnage in those years had increased from 945,000 tons to 1,853,000.

The substitution of steamers for sailing vessels has, of course, done more than anything to give Great Britain the lead as the great shipping nation of the world; since the development of her iron and coal resources, and the ready distribution of these products, which her network of railways made possible, have enabled her to build steamships advantageously, and to compete successfully with the rest of the world in this department of commercial energy. The total tonnage of British steamships, entered and cleared in the foreign trade nearly doubled between 1860 and 1865. Taking the figures for the world's steamships and sailing vessels of 100 tons register and upwards, Lloyd's Register of

British and Foreign Shipping gives the total at 26,561,250 tons, of which upwards of half, or 13,-665,312 tons are British (United Kingdom and Colonies). Out of these totals a little more than 7 million tons are sailing vessels, and of this roundly 2½ millions are British. As to numbers, we have 11,143 steamers to 3,441 sailing vessels. So that in the forty years since steamships first came into use, it may be said that they have practically supplanted sailing craft.

Since 1892 the building of sailing ships has rapidly decreased. Thus, in that year sailing vessels formed a quarter of the year's output, but in 1897 it was only 3 per cent. of the total. In recent years something like 25 per cent. of the total output has been built to the order of foreign or colonial shipowners. The increase in speed has been another noticeable feature connected with vessels built during the last two decades. Some of the Cunard steamers average 19½ knots an hour, the average of the P. & O. boats being 14½ knots.*

* At the moment of writing, this question of speed has a special significance, seeing that among the many outstanding charges against the Imperial Government in connection with the conduct of the war in South Africa, its members will have to explain why, when every day was of the utmost importance to us, seeing that the Boers had crossed over into British territory within a day or two of the presentation of their presumptuous ultimatum, they were content to send out the troops in driblets in comparatively slow-going transports. The *Campania* and *Lucania* of the Cunard Line; the *Majestic* and *Teutonic* of the White Star Line; the *Himalaya*, *Aus-*

The influence this enormous fleet of steamships has had upon the development of inter-imperial trade has been most potent; but it has had a greater

tralia, *Victoria* and *Arcadia* of the P. & O. Line; and the *Empresses*, of the Canadian Pacific Railway, are all under subvention, and their owners were bound to place them, if called upon to do so, at the disposal of the Government. The Cunarders had a speed of more than 20 knots an hour; the first two P. & O. boats 18, and the other two 16½, and the *Empresses* 17. Instead of using such vessels exclusively, thereby saving a week or ten days, which would have made all the difference to our fortunes in South Africa, the War Office contented itself with vessels of a very different calibre, good, bad and indifferent vessels, many bad in other respects besides as to their speed. And it may be said here that this is only one among a hundred instances which go to show that all those old sins of procrastination, indifferentism, trusting to chance and luck; all those engrained errors of false economy and unpreparedness which have cost us so dear in the past, still cling to us. The plea in this transport error is likely to be that the use of these subsidised steamers would have led to a dislocation of the trade of the country. This is an utterly untenable plea, as anyone who knows the habits of these vessels and their long detention in dock can attest. The real explanation has to be sought elsewhere. False ideas of economy and jobbery are responsible for these errors, combined with the self-sufficiency, carelessness, and sloth of persons in high authority. This is no random accusation. Our officers in South Africa have been minus military maps, no proper ordnance survey of the country having been accomplished. They are without trustworthy guides and scouts. Our soldiers have been badly fed on their outward journey. But the list of criminal oversights and ugly scandals is limitless. They go to prove that it is high time the junior partners of the Empire, the colonies, insisted upon having some control over its destinies. Our Intelligence Department has shown itself to be now, as it ever was, a caricature of what such a department should be—the laughing-stock of Europe.

influence even in drawing the inhabitants of the various portions of the Empire together. Canada is linked to the Motherland by half-a-dozen lines of fast steamers, conveying passengers and mails, and has also a direct service in connection with the Canadian Pacific Railway with Australia. The Castle Line and Union Line link Great Britain with South Africa, and both fleets contain magnificent vessels. India and Australia are served by the world-renowned Peninsular & Oriental Company. The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company dispatches steamers from Southampton to the West Indies, Central America and the North and South Pacific. The West Indies are also served by the West India & Pacific Steamship Company. The British & African Steam Navigation Company conveys passengers and mails from Liverpool to the West Coast of Africa, where Great Britain possesses a number of Crown Colonies.

Apart from the lines which directly connect the various colonies with the Mother Country, there are others, such as the Canadian-Australian line already mentioned, the Empress line and the New Zealand Shipping Company, which connect different colonies with each other. So far as tonnage and horse-power go, the steamers plying between Great Britain and America take precedence. Some of the Cunarders have a tonnage of 13,000 tons and their horse-power is 30,000. The highest tonnage of the P. & O. boats is 8,000, of the Castle Line upwards of 8,000, but

larger vessels are about to be launched, and of the Union Line, 10,300 tons. To-day it is possible to cross the Atlantic in 5 days and 8 hours; the mail packets to Cape Town accomplish the journey in 15 days. The P. & O. boats are under contract to deliver the mails in 16½ days to Bombay and 35½ to Melbourne, though the fastest vessel in the service has landed the mails in Bombay within 12¾ days of their dispatch from London. It is obvious that these splendid services represent an enormous amount of capital; indeed it is stated that in 20 years, 7 millions sterling have been expended on the P. & O. boats alone.

It is not necessary to cast one's mind back to the beginning of the century, to get a full understanding of the enormous progress which has been made in steam communication by water; because that progress has really been confined to the last fifty years or less. There are alive to-day many thousands of persons who have had actual experience of those miserable voyages to the Cape, India and Australia, in sailing vessels absolutely void of the manifold comforts with which the ocean steamers of the present day are so liberally furnished. These took as many months and often many more months to accomplish their respective journeys than under existing conditions are accomplished in weeks.

To deal with the growth of our shipping in another way, some figures of Mr. Mulhall may be given. He shows that the increase in carrying power of our

mercantile marine between 1840 and 1895 is as follows: For the first year, 2,848,000 tons; for 1895, 27,350,000, and that, while in 1840, 108 tons were carried by 1,000 of the population, in 1895, the total was 701 tons. Again, the substitution of steam for sails has so far increased the efficiency of seamen, that whereas in 1840 one man had the control of 200 tons, in 1895, 1,140 tons were in the charge of one seaman, or in other words, one seaman can do as much in carrying to-day as six could do in 1840. In 1892, Great Britain did more than half the carrying trade of the seas; including the Colonies it was 60 per cent. of the whole. Sir William White (Chief Constructor of the Navy), speaking a few months since, practically substantiated the figures given above, and further stated that British shipbuilding attained its highest production last year (1898). It must be obvious to every one that our shipping has now become the life and breath of the Empire; and that since its existence is dependent upon our navy, the continued efficiency of this service is absolutely essential to our national existence.

I have dwelt upon the birth and development of steam communication by water, before referring to the equally marvellous results following upon the application of steam to locomotion on land, because steamers were of earlier date than railways; and again steamships have had a more direct bearing upon the development of the Empire, as a whole, than have railways. They have linked together its

component parts; railways have aided the internal development of those parts.

The development of railways has been directly under the eyes of the people, the nation as a whole; and not of a comparatively small section of it, and this is why the history of railway rise and progress, as narrated in print or told to us by our grandsires, possesses so many elements of romance and interest. There are many persons living to-day, including our revered Sovereign, who had arrived at an age when memory and reason had asserted themselves, before, to use the vernacular, "such a thing as a railway was known," for the tentative efforts and experiments of the early part of the century were not in the general knowledge. The Liverpool & Manchester Railway was opened in 1830, when the Queen was in her twelfth year. When she came to the throne there were five short railways in the United Kingdom, which in all did not exceed in length 110 miles. The Liverpool & Manchester line was followed by the line from Leicester to Swannington, but it was not until a movement was set on foot to connect London and Birmingham by a railway that the public was really aroused to interest itself, for or against, in railway enterprise. As a matter of fact, the opposition to this project was prolonged and strenuous. The passage through Parliament of the bill sanctioning it, cost its promoters £70,000, and it was only when the greedy landowners had been promised twice or thrice what was origin-

ally considered a fair value for their land, that they withdrew their opposition to it.

The line was opened in 1838. Then followed, or to be exact, railway building activity was already in the full tide of life before 1838, that marvellous "boom" in railways. Up to 1840 as many as 299 acts authorising the construction of about 3,000 miles of railway had passed into law; and before that time nearly all the great railway systems of the Kingdom had been sanctioned and were all in process of construction. Since Great Britain has now upwards of 21,500 miles of railway open, it is obvious that what was done in these early years was in the nature of beginnings. Each succeeding year saw the sanction of thousands of miles, until the people went fairly mad over the matter. In 1846, Parliament sanctioned 4,790 miles; in 1847, 1,663 miles. In the former year, 1,300 fresh projects, or propositions to speak in the ugly argot of the company promoters. were brought out, and the public was asked to subscribe 600 millions sterling for the prosecution of these schemes. It dawned at last on the frenzied speculators that there was no room for half or for a quarter of these undertakings. In 1848 the crash came, bringing ruin to thousands and tens of thousands.

Nevertheless, railways continued and flourished exceedingly. From time to time came suggestions of State purchase; but the capital involved in such a scheme was so gigantic, and the interests and rival-

ries so complicated, Parliament has always refused to face the matter. As to the progress of railways, space will not allow more to be done than to give a few figures to indicate what has been accomplished, and what is the position of railway companies of the United Kingdom to-day. The paid-up capital represents about £1,100,000,000, equivalent at market prices to about half as much again. The receipts are something under 100 millions annually; in 1897 they were £93,737,054, and in that year the working expenses were £53,083,804. In 1897 the number of passengers carried, exclusive of season ticket holders, was 1,030,420,201. As to accidents, the average as compared with the number of passengers is infinitesimal, though the figures look large. It has been shown that the risks of railway travelling are far less than those of the streets. Yet when railways were first opened, the public regarded travelling by them as the most adventurous and fearsome proceeding, not to be undertaken until one had made one's will. Meanwhile, the comforts of travel have been vastly increased; for it is evident that in the early days of the enterprise, all save the first-class passenger had a most unhappy time.

The building of railways has led to the building of towns where villages once were; to the removal of the people from congested areas to districts which give them breathing space and *vice versa;* to the spread of knowledge through intercommunication between province and province, town and town, village and vil-

lage; to the diffusion of wealth, and to many another happy result. But, on the other hand, although I do not agree with John Ruskin that the railway is invariably a blot on the landscape,—on the contrary it is often a most pleasing feature—it is impossible to deny that where bricks and mortar have been used in its construction, it is commonly not only a defacement in itself, but the parent of defacement, for it has brought the advertiser in its train. In every case it has brought the jerry builder and many another abomination.

It is much to be regretted, too, that the introduction of railways stopped the development of canals —mischievously and precipitately. There is no more picturesque method of conveying goods than by water-ways, and where rivers are non-existent, canals form—Holland proves this conclusively—very passable substitutes. Moreover, for imperishable goods, where quickness of delivery was not imperative, canals formed a very convenient and inexpensive means of transit. So far as the South of England is concerned, the decay of local industries, especially iron smelting, helped to bring about the ruin of the canals. Now, when these canals are choked with weeds and rubbish, filled in here and bridged over there, the weirs and locks in hopeless decay, it has dawned on many that the conclusion come to with the advent of railways, that their uses were over, was a hasty one. Even now the canals of the United Kingdom carry nearly double as much merchandise

as they carried when railways were in their infancy, though they do little to cheapen the price of transit, since most of them have fallen into the hands of the railway companies.

Compared with other countries, Great Britain has more miles of railway than any other state in relation to its area; but some other countries have a greater mileage in comparison with their population. It is not possible to give in detail the railway progress made by the colonies during the century; though obviously much might be written here with propriety on that subject, seeing that two of these railways, in any case, are of the utmost strategical importance. The one, the Canadian Pacific, actually, because it has long since been complete; and the other, the Rhodesian Railway, potentially rather than actually, since until it has been extended northwards and spanned the African continent, its value is local. Even when it has spanned the continent, that awkward strip of German territory will render its use as an imperial highway indirect rather than direct. So far, however, as these colonial railways are concerned, they play so important a part in the development of the respective colonies, they are sure to be treated at length in the volumes of this series devoted to those colonies. It would be impossible to exaggerate the importance of the Canadian Pacific Railway, either as it touches the interests, the very life of Canada, or as it concerns imperial interests.

The railways of the Cape, of Natal and Rhodesia are, in scarcely less degree, the life blood of those colonies, and the like may be said of those of the republics now in rebellion. Now-a-days railways are, so to speak, the handmaids of war; in any case the present war has demonstrated conclusively how important they are from a military point of view, and how their full control has the most immediate bearing upon the fortunes of the belligerents.

As to Australia, which like South Africa is practically devoid of navigable rivers, railways again bear a relation to national prosperity which it would be impossible to exaggerate. The settled districts of Australia are intersected by something like 12,000 miles of railways. Since, however, it has now been ascertained beyond doubt that the central part of the whole continent is a hopeless waste, there is little or no prospect of Australia being intersected by a continuous line as Canada has been, and Africa is about to be.

The railways of India, unlike those of all the colonies, instead of contributing handsomely to the respective revenue of those colonies, entail an annual loss to the Government of India amounting in 1897–8 to a total of upwards of 57 millions since the commencement of the railway era in 1853.

It remains to say that many projects are afoot for providing the various West African colonies with railways, and that in British East Africa the line from the coast to Uganda is advancing satis-

factorily, and may be expected to be complete somewhere about the opening of the new century.

Although perhaps it would be scarcely fair or correct to say that the effective postal arrangements, which have been the pride and joy of this country during nearly the whole of Her Majesty's reign, must be regarded as a direct outcome of railways, since, in 1837, when Rowland Hill startled the Government with his suggestion for a uniform penny post, railways were in their infancy—the London & Birmingham line was not opened until the next year—still it was doubtless because men of large mind, capable of appreciating future developments, had determined that railways were coming, that they gave support to a scheme which Sir Robert Peel and his Government looked upon as an idle, not to say mischievous, dream. In any case, Rowland Hill's scheme must have remained a dream had not the extension of railways preceded its realisation, or to be quite correct, developed concurrently with it—on parallel lines one may say.

The history of the growth of the inland post is full of fascination. The penny post has doubtless exercised a most powerful influence over the fortunes of the people; and in the main that influence has been for good. Under the old system, the average correspondence of each person living in the United Kingdom fell below 4 letters annually. In 1875 it had reached 33, and in that year over 1,000 millions of letters and post cards were sent through the

post. Since then even, the progress has been nothing less than amazing. No doubt the compulsory education of the people is answerable for the fact that the number of persons able and willing to write, has increased vastly since that date. In 1885 the average had reached 55, though papers are included in this number, and in 1895, also including papers, to 73.

Again, in 1839, the number of letters passing through the post annually, was estimated at 82 millions. The number for 1897–8 was 2,372,700,000, including post cards. If book packets, circulars, samples, newspapers and parcels are added to letters and post cards, we get a total of 3,318,723,000, or an average number for each person of 83.1. Out of this business the country made a profit of close on 4 millions sterling, but a loss of £309,538 was incurred in the telegraph department. As in the case of the railways this enormous business means the employment of a great many hands. The staff of the Post Office stood at 150,110 in 1897–8.

It is not of course only in the carriage of letters that the Post Office has made such wonderful strides. It has also the telegraphic business of the country under its control. In 1872, 15½ million messages were sent, in the ratio of 50 per 100 inhabitants; in 1895, 71,600,000, the ratio being 180 per 100 inhabitants. In 1897–8, including press and foreign telegrams, the total was 83,029,999.

Telephones are not at present entirely the

monopoly of the Post Office; but during 1897-8, 5,898,247 conversations were carried on through the trunk wires attached to the Government system.

Reference has not been made to the institution of an Imperial Penny Post in its more obvious place, because it was more convenient to deal with the growth of inland postal and telegraphic communication, as affecting the metropolis of the Empire, before referring to that large growth which has included the whole Empire. Until the institution of the Imperial Penny Post, the charge for letters not exceeding half an ounce had already been reduced to a uniform rate, which was, roughly speaking, 2½d. to all parts of the world. Now, with the exception of one or two, for the most part small colonies, the charge is reduced to a penny. This charge was arranged at the Imperial Conference on Postage held in July, 1898, and most of the colonies adhered to the scheme so as to enable the Government to introduce it on Christmas day, 1898, the Cape coming in later in the year, or early in 1899.

I had intended to give here a brief history of the determined fight this measure had to make before it secured acceptance, but my space is running out, and I must put a curb on my pen. Suffice it to say that although the idea did not actually originate with Mr. Henniker Heaton—the member for Canterbury, a politician who spent much of his earlier life in Australia—the triumph of the scheme must be ascribed almost entirely to his persistent and inde-

fatigable efforts. From 1886 to 1898, in and out of Parliament, in and out of season, Mr. Heaton never let the subject rest. He was opposed by the "Mandarins of the Post Office," by the Treasury, and, unkindest cut of all, by the colonies themselves. But he never wearied, until, as we have seen, in 1898, the Postmaster-General (the Duke of Norfolk) and Mr. Chamberlain, with Mr. Mulock, the Canadian Postmaster-General, entered the field as supporters of the measure, with the result that Mr. Heaton's efforts were finally crowned with success. It is a peculiar irony of fate, that Australia, which may be regarded as Mr. Heaton's foster mother, for sometime signalised herself by standing out of the scheme.

The story of the early struggles of the submarine telegraphists reads like the story of the early struggles of the promoters of the penny post, the imperial penny post and railways, and should in conjunction with these stories have a tonic effect at the moment at which I happen to be writing. No Englishman can read these stories without being consciously proud of the achievements of his immediate ancestors and contemporaries; and as he reads he feels braced up for the extremely arduous and strenuous work lying immediately before him, in a matter, too, which like the foregoing is mainly one of organisation. But that is a political and military story I must deal with elsewhere.

Obviously, however, these submarine cables have a political interest which transcends their merely com-

mercial importance. From a trade point of view, the tardily successful laying of the cable between England and America was all important, but from a political point of view it was far more so. The mere expansion of trade taken alone does not necessarily make a people great. We were all coming to think so, and it is well that we are being rudely awakened from our vicious self-complacency.

The first attempt to lay a submarine cable between England and America was made in 1857. It failed. The next year the cable was successfully laid; but it snapped, and it was not until 1865 that complete success rewarded the efforts of the telegraphic engineers. Since then (indeed, some of the shorter cables were laid earlier) the various parts of the earth have been conjoined by telegraphic cables, the course taken following the lines of the great trade routes. And, as I have said, the political and strategical importance of these submarine cables cannot be exaggerated. Their existence has averted war, and it has precipitated war. So far as the British Empire be concerned, cables have done much to keep it together; but as Mr. Henniker Heaton has so often remarked, they might have done much more had the absurd charges which monopoly has been permitted to extract from the public, been brought more into accord with common sense and common requirements. That the successive governments which have had the control of the nation's affairs have bungled the telegraphic service of the

Empire is not surprising; since our system of government is so astoundingly wrong-headed, we put men who have no kind of knowledge of the business they undertake into the various offices of state. Thus we have at the War Office, and have always had, men who are dunces in the art of war; at the Admiralty, gentlemen whose time has been given to building up big newspaper-selling concerns, and at the Post Office, noblemen and gentlemen absolutely ignorant of the requirements of the trading community. The effect of having persons at the Colonial Office who have disdained to try even to acquire a knowledge of the geography of the countries they were called upon (in an imperial sense) to rule, has been most disastrous in the past. In looking down the list of Colonial Secretaries of the century, it is impossible to find more than three or four at the most, until we read the name of Joseph Chamberlain, who have not been ashamed of their business. Many of them were frankly incompetent, while others, such as Bulwer-Lytton and Lord Granville, can only be regarded, when one considers them as the custodians of a mighty Empire, as the merest triflers and *farceurs,* treating their office with a levity which would permit them to let matters of state wait should the relating of an anecdote or the delivery of a *bon mot* stand in the way. The Empire has been brought on to the breakers again and again during the century by men who lacked the smallest measure of proleptic

imagination, and who also lacked knowledge of the countries confided to their keeping, and the desire or capacity to gain that knowledge. To-day it is clear that almost the only public office which can be considered so far to have proved itself possessed of anything approaching efficiency, is the Colonial Office. Even that office leaves much to be desired, for the neglect and vicious traditions of years cannot be made good in a less number of months.

It must be singularly galling to the head of that office to find, as he has found, that those limbs of the public service with which he counted upon to work in unison, have become atrophied or paralysed. That the War Office could not supply the officers taking the field with ordnance maps, because the country in which they had to operate had never been properly surveyed: that the army lacked the most modern and effective weapons, with a score or more discoveries which have during the last few months become matters of common knowledge. Englishmen had fondly hoped that the normal state of our army throughout the wars of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, down to the war in the Crimea, had given place to the most perfect arrangements in peace for the organisation of our forces in war. They have been rudely awakened from this dream.

And in nothing has our easy-going laxity been more painfully apparent, than in our neglect to provide the Empire with an effective telegraphic service.

Sir Edward Sassoon, speaking at the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce late in 1899, disclosed, to use the words of the *Morning Post,* "an astounding degree of incompetence in the public administration of a great Imperial interest." Incompetence is only a part of the indictment, but stronger terms may be dispensed with, since the facts speak for themselves. The cables to Asia and Africa are in the hands of three subsidised companies, the Eastern Telegraph, the Eastern Extension and the Indo-European Telegraphic Companies. They pay their shareholders a high interest, from 6½ to 10 per cent., and they mulct the public in ridiculous charges for doing its business. Thus a telegram can be sent to Persia, over wires not in the hands of these companies, at the rate of 6½d. a word, while the charge to India is 4s. a word. This instance must suffice. I am aware that the companies have a reasonable defence; the Eastern Telegraph Company has recently made a good one. But I am not attacking the companies; I am lamenting the lapses of the Imperial Government. If space allowed, I should go into this matter more fully, but I must say that I cannot but agree with Sir Edward Sassoon's contention that the Government of this country, from the earliest days of submarine telegraphy, has "displayed a magnificent want of skill and knowledge in dealing with telegraph companies." The haggling and delay which have prevented South Africa from enjoying a single all-British cable communication

to the Cape is a scandal which finds its counterpart in the history of the project for linking Canada with the Australasian colonies. In May, 1899, it was announced that at last a working arrangement had been come to whereby the Pacific cable, which had been mooted for the last ten or eleven years, should become an accomplished fact. There can be no question that the terms offered by the Imperial Government were extremely niggardly, and pressed unfairly on the Canadian Dominion and the Australasian colonies. They have now been modified. But while ministers hum and haw and allow themselves to be made the instruments, unwittingly no doubt, of those powerful persons who have vested interests at stake, a situation may suddenly arise and bring disaster in its train, a situation which might have been met and combated successfully had our rulers taken time by the forelock and prepared for evil days ahead.

CHAPTER XII.

SOCIAL PROGRESS.

WHILE deeply conscious of the many imperfections of this attempt of mine to give something like an accurate picture of the progress of the Empire in the century; I hope I have at least avoided the sin of vain-gloriousness. Perhaps in no branch of the subject is it so difficult to escape this fault as in writing of the general advance, social, intellectual and material, of the British people, for on the face of it in any case this advance has been so remarkable as to justify a certain measure of national jactitation. Obviously, it is not necessary to deal with this advance in detail; since the religious, political, literary, artistic, scientific, educational and industrial progress of the British peoples will be dealt with in the volumes of this series treating respectively these aspects of progress as affecting the whole world. But it is scarcely possible to escape passing in rapid survey the general growth in mind and body—we have already dealt sufficiently with estate—of the nation during the century.

Beginning with education. There are to-day few persons so ill-educated as not to know that at the opening of the century the great mass of the people

was entirely without education. So late even as the date of the Queen's accession to the throne, 44 per cent. of the people were unable to sign their names. This proportion now, and it is rapidly growing less and less, is about 6 or 7 per cent. In the early part of the century, the Sunday schools were about the only medium of instruction for the poor. These were supplemented some years before George III. was gathered to his fathers, by the National Society's schools, promoted by the Church of England, and by the schools of the British and Foreign School Society, in whose schools the Bible was taught, but the Catechism was excluded. State aid to these schools began in 1803 with an annual grant of £20,000. Thanks to the untiring efforts of Sir James Shuttleworth, this aid was increased, until in 1865 the grant reached nearly half a million sterling. Twenty years later Mr. Forster introduced his Compulsory Education Act, which provided for the education of 1,100,000 children. At the present time most of the colonies have Government schools. Those of Cape Colony—though the Superinterdent-General of Education, Dr. Muir, has achievdd marvels in the way of improving the status of teachers and raising the curriculum—being perhaps the least advanced, Dutch opposition has to be reckoned with; while probably those of New Zealand are the most advanced. The Cape, however, has made a decided move forward in the direction of technical education, a branch of instruction for which very much still re-

mains to be done in the United Kingdom. England lags behind, too, in secondary schools, for although the upper classes of the premier Kingdom are provided with splendid schools—Eton, Winchester, Rugby, Harrow—the northern Kingdom has a far more effective educational system for the middle classes, as have Germany, Holland, Belgium and even the United States.

If one were asked what is the great defect of the English compulsory educational system, the answer should be that it is to be found in the hard and fast curriculum which, however much it may suit urban districts, is totally unsuited to the needs of the rural population. It is certainly extremely hard on the farmers and landowners, who are the ratepayers in agricultural England, that they should have to pay for a system of education the main effect of which is to drive the up-growing youth out of the country into the towns. There are born in the provinces, every year, 80,000 persons who find their way into the towns. This is only partly because they cannot find employment at home, as defenders of our precious economic laws assert; nor is it wholly because those economic laws have rendered farming so unprofitable that at present we do not produce enough wheat to feed the people for 2½ months instead of sufficient to feed them for 11 months—the case in 1837. Neither is it due to the fact (the cause of which may be an ineptitude in the people, the land laws, the economic laws or all) that small hold-

ings are anything but general in this country. Education, although not the root of the evil, is a potent contributory to it. And the evil itself is not merely a farmer's evil. The evil, as I have already laboured to show, is a national one. It is robbing the land, here and in the colonies, of its natural cultivators.

In this matter I am greatly struck with the arguments of Mr. P. Anderson Graham, who, writing in the *Morning Post,* urges that elementary education in the rural districts should have not only a direct bearing on the subsequent work of the rustic pupil, but that his studies should be conducted, as far as possible, out of doors, with a minimum of book work. I can vouch from my own personal knowledge that the existing system merely results in cramming into the heads of scholars, useless, ill-digested knowledge, rarely retained. Country children are no longer able to tell an enquirer the popular names of the birds, flowers, beasts and insects, the common objects of the country side. The eyes of children, both in country and town, should be trained to see, and the hands to work, and their imaginations should be cultivated.

Again, it is nothing short of barbarity that children should be compelled to sit long hours in school, their ill-fed bodies clothed in damp garments. Their parents are robbed of their services in the cottage or in the fields, services which directly or indirectly contribute, however little, to the maintenance of the

family; and it must be remembered that many families among the rural poor have to be supported on twelve shillings a week and number a round dozen. Small wonder that many parents are quite unable to feed their children; the fresh air and the fumes of upturned soil do that. Still the physical hurt done to these young lives from insufficient nutrition is enormous, and would not be compensated for were they made paragons of learning. If the State arbitrarily educates the child, surely the State, where it is shown to be necessary, should feed the child during the time that child has been compulsorily taken from its parents. If under conscription the State takes a grown man to serve his country as a soldier, the State feeds that man. The child is educated so that he may become a better citizen, a better wage-earner, and therefore better taxpayer. It seems to be common justice and common sense that where it can be shown the parent cannot feed his child—we are not dealing with those parents who can but won't, for they could be compelled to do so—the State should step in.

But the subject is too large to deal with here. I have dealt with it often enough elsewhere, and claim to speak with some slight authority, having sat on a rural School Board for some years. Rational education has a warm friend in me, but the present system of State education is so faulty its defects go far to nullify its benefits. It has of course raised the general intelligence of the community,

but it has destroyed individuality, so much so that whereas in all other ages of the nation's history men of the first rank, rising from the masses, were by no means phenomenal; now they are among the rarities of rarities.

Again, faulty as the system is for the country, it is scarcely less faulty for the towns. Children should be taught to do something useful with their hands while they are at school—and this applies to education generally. Technical education is little better than a farce, both for boys and girls. Moreover, although a child must of course be taught the three R's, equal pains should be taken to give him a real grip of the history, geography and resources of the Empire.

On the other hand, higher education, the education of the Universities, has undergone marvellous improvement during the century. Oxford and Cambridge were in a condition which the epithet scandalous inadequately describes, in the eighteenth century. As educational agencies they scarcely existed. Throwing open the fellowships to general competition was a salutary measure, and the Commissions, from Lord John Russell's (in 1850) downwards, have gradually purged the Universities of the manifold abuses which disgraced them, and to-day they are once again worthy of their great past and their great traditions. Other leading bodies have arisen, such as the London University, King's College, London, and Owen's College, Manchester, while every colony has provided itself with agencies for higher education.

That higher education has advanced is not contested. On the other hand, it is too hastily assumed that education has done everything for the people. Sir James Shuttleworth's picture of the helots, as he called them, of the South of England at the beginning of the century, painted both children and parents as creatures little removed from imbecility; and certainly if this picture be accepted there has been great improvement, though it would appear that the peasantry of East Norfolk and of many parts of Suffolk are very little better, if at all better, than the South Saxons of 1800.

Manners are said to have improved, and possibly there is less drunkenness and evil-speaking among the upper classes, as there is perhaps among the lower; but this gain is balanced by an increased laxity in the ranks of the middle classes, and among the women of every class. The loss of respect among the people for their social superiors may be pardoned where that respect was not earned by personal qualities. Unfortunately the new democracy is inclined to respect nothing and nobody; personal qualities least of all: if it retains respect for anybody it is for the man with the long purse.

The regrettable increase in the number of divorces among the upper classes, which now total annually about 450 in Great Britain—in Ireland it is 4 or 5, a fact which speaks trumpet-mouthed for the marital constancy of the Irish people—is balanced by the decrease in the total of illegitimate births among

the lower classes, and by the marked diminution in the number of convictions for crime, and this is so even if we remember the fact that in the earlier part of the century punishments were inflicted for trivial offences.

The statistics of crime, however, again go to prove that the middle classes lag behind. While the public conscience has been shocked at the number of peers who have sullied their names by associating themselves with bubble companies, it is recognised that the new-born zeal for commerce which has taken possession of the upper classes as the result of their practical ruin as landowners, and the inexperience of these classes in the ways of business, in some measure condone their faults; while it is at least permissible to congratulate ourselves that if influence as the road to preferment is by no means dead in the public services, corruption is rare; one may hope it is practically unknown. On the other hand commercial morality has, it is to be feared, steadily declined; the lust of riches having eaten into the heart of the middle classes. Also it is only too true that the crimes of embezzlement and betrayal of trust on the part of managers, secretaries, trustees and clerks, men in positions of responsibility, have shown a decided tendency to increase throughout the Empire.

Every lover of freedom must rejoice at the advance the century has seen in the direction of the political emancipation of the people, since those days early in the century when Burdett barricaded himself in his home in Piccadilly and defied the mandate of a

tyrannical parliament, and Hone fought his splendid battle on behalf of freedom and got the better of the reactionary Lord Ellenborough. When the century opened, no larger number than fifty persons could meet together for a public purpose without first obtaining magisterial sanction. Elections were carried by bribery, naked and unashamed. Papist, Jew and Quaker had no political and few civil rights; while society ostracised them. All these injustices and many another have ceased to disgrace our civilisation.

It cannot be denied, however, that the pendulum has swung dangerously far in the other direction. Liberty has tended to degenerate into licence, and freedom into political indifference. Lord Salisbury has recently complained that the British Constitution lacks in fighting qualities. The Premier was not particularly referring to the divided authority everywhere, in cabinet, parliament or country, which makes it impossible for any one man, however strong, to act or rule on his own initiative; but it is certain that the extension of the franchise and the delegation of power to a mass of persons, who have proved themselves up to now quite incapable of grasping imperial issues, have involved the Empire, again and again, in great risks. The system paralyses action, because strong men in power know that a wave of popular sentimentality may at any time arise and sweep them and their plans into Limbo. This, however, is one aspect of a larger subject, the curse of our system of government by

party, repeated unhappily in the colonies, which results in the subordination of national issues to minor local ones. Space will not permit more to be said on this colossal evil. There is only one cure for it —decentralisation as to local affairs, and the erection of a real instead of a nominal imperial parliament by taking the self-governing colonies into partnership.

To return to the more purely domestic aspect of this policy of the devolution of power to the democracy by extending the freedom of action of the labouring classes. It cannot be said that it has added to the individual freedom of those classes, since the growth of trades-unionism, beginning as it did in combinations enabling the workers to resist the oppression of selfish employers and capitalists, and in extending the advantages of benefit societies, has ended by reducing the workers to automatic machines, which at the will of small governing bodies are made to wage war on the employers of labour. The granting of wages beyond their market value from the European standpoint, and the long periods of idleness—the competitive foreigners' opportunity—which strikes entail, have sent trade from the British Isles to Belgium, Germany and America, much of which will never return.

While, then, it is by no means certain that the extension of the franchise, by lowering it to a level which practically means manhood suffrage, has been productive of good outbalancing evil, and this largely because that the education of the people so called

is not in any real sense an educational or training force or agency, it is impossible to be confident that the marvellous development of the press and of cheap literature is an unmixed blessing. Human nature is so constituted that it does not value what it obtains cheaply; while the multiplication of books and journals, produced for the rapid consumption of the average intelligence, must tend to keep that intelligence on a lowly plane. In saying this, the whole nation is referred to and not any particular section of it. Our ancestors read less, but on the whole their literary food was of a far more solid and enduring character than ours. The scarcity of books, and the comparative rarity of journals, induced readers to make themselves masters of what they read with the result that they really absorbed nourishing mental food. Now the food offered is of a comparatively poor quality; and is looked upon by ninety-nine readers as a "nip" rather than solid food. Indeed "snippets" are more read than anything else. The classics are neglected for books of the most trivial nature; and works of real imaginative power, the great poets and romancers, for the newest novels, for the most part trash of a brain-rotting kind. The froth of literature bubbles merrily in the circulating libraries, while the readers of history, biography and philosophy are, in proportion to the population, a vanishing minority. The returns of all our libraries bear out the truth of this assertion; while as showing how reluctant the people are to address themselves to informing liter-

ature, Mr. FitzPatrick's book on the Transvaal, though recognised universally as giving the most complete and trustworthy account of a matter of supreme public interest and moment, has been quoted as a phenomenal success because its circulation ran into a score or so thousands.

As to the craze for light fiction and for tit-bit and illustrated journalism, which has affected the people, it has exercised a most deteriorating influence on the mental fibre of the present generation, and has, perhaps, done more than any other disintegrating force to take men and women, and especially women, from the serious business of life. It accounts for more neglected domestic duties and unhappy homes than any other single cause. So far as men go, the effect has been negative rather than actual, since the rejection of the master-pieces for the penny pieces of literature has turned them away from the study of the larger things of life, accounting in no small measure for the extraordinary dearth at this moment of men of light and leading in every department of human affairs.

How different it was at the beginning of the century! There were fewer readers of course, but men who read in any case (excluding of course the mere triflers of society, who possibly read the trashy fiction and poetry in fashion at the moment as the women of that class certainly did) read literature—abiding work. A little later when war had quickened men's pulses, as the material suffering entailed had stimulated their spiritual and intellectual life,

giants arose. In poetry—Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Landor, Burns and Byron with their aftermath, Tennyson, Browning, William Morris and Rossetti. In fiction—Scott, Thackeray, Dickens, Kingsley, Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, a long and glorious company ending in Hardy, Meredith and Stevenson. Obviously no classification is intended; nothing in the shape of literary criticism. These names are merely given as the names of giants who influenced their day and generation. They have few successors to-day. It is true we have struggled out of the slough of that school of literary triflers to whom the turn of a phrase was everything, the substance nothing. The robust romance of Rider Haggard, infused as it is with the primitiveness of Zulu life and thought; the elevating imperialism of Kipling have dissipated the vapours of this unhealthy and emasculated school.

Writers have multiplied, but the number of great writers, has by no means increased. Macaulay, Carlyle, Froude, Grote, J. R. Green, Freeman, can scarcely be said to have left successors; nor is it possible to point to the contemporary equals of Matthew Arnold in literary criticism, and John Ruskin in art criticism. As to colonial literature —creative literature, that is to say—with a few notable exceptions, it cannot be said to exist, nor is there any need, as a critic remarked the other day, in speaking particularly of Australasia, for these young lands, "their life still in the heyday of effort, to hurry up in the making of literature."

The Victorian age, both in pure and in applied science, has produced a splendid crop of writers. Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall have left Herbert Spencer and Lord Kelvin to represent them. For the rest, in comparing the end of the century with its beginning and its maturity, we must remember that this has been an age of remarkable intellectual growth, and that one must expect some signs of exhaustion after a sustained period of lavish fruition. The position is advanced that whereas, in the early part of the century the classics and good literature were almost exclusively read by the readers of the community, and that in the second and third quarters magnificent work was produced and absorbed by the people, the last quarter of the century, until the renaissance of which we see signs to-day, has fed itself on husks, while literary circles have accepted as their models the high-priests of *persiflage*, paradox and pruriency.

As to the marvellous "growth" of journalism, one need not be supposed to be insensible to it, or to deny that on the whole it has exercised a beneficial influence upon the people. Still it is permissible to point out that that influence has not been entirely for good, in that it has encouraged a superficial habit of reading and thinking in all classes of the people, who now being able to acquire knowledge so readily, are too idle to go to the first sources of information. On the other hand the multiplication of cheap newspapers and journals has given the poor an available and, for the most part, pure and health-

ful source of instruction and recreation, and has unquestionably added to the pleasures of life, and done something to mitigate its sorrows and disappointments.

At the beginning of the century the price of newspapers was prohibitive for the working classes, and indeed for the mass of the middle classes. There was a duty on paper; a stamp duty on all journals; and on all advertisements a 3s. 6d. duty. Thus one of the "Old Guard" (see Chapter X.) tells us that in Sussex, a newspaper cost 2s. 7d. in or about 1815.

In 1829, 308 newspapers were published in the United Kingdom, of which 55 were issued in London, 37 in Scotland, and 59 in Ireland. There were 13 dailies with a joint circulation of 40,000 copies. They boasted 900 advertisements between them. The highest rate of production from the printing press was 2,800 copies an hour. In 1836 the stamp duty was reduced from 4d. to 1d., and the duty on advertisements from 3s. 6d. to 1s. 6d. This duty was abolished altogether in 1853, the stamp duty in 1855, and the paper duty in 1861. In 1839 London published 94 papers, 256 issued from the provinces, 59 from Scotland and 70 from Ireland. In that year the *Times* had a circulation of 1,090,000 copies during April, May and June, the *Chronicle* coming next with 530,000 copies. In 1875, 325 papers were published in London, 1,300 in the provinces, 149 in Scotland and 137 in Ireland. In 1887 the total for the British Isles was 2,135, in 1898 it was 2,418, and the numbers have continued to increase. And, as

Dr. Richard Garnett remarks, to describe the prodigious improvements in press machinery would require a volume.

The gross annual income of the newspapers of the United Kingdom was stated a few years since to be 16 millions sterling, and in 1896 the monthly issue amounted to 174 millions, or a little short of 7 millions daily. It was not until 1841 that any daily paper was published in England outside London; and the first penny paper, the *Daily News*, was issued in 1846. Now we have in London alone half a dozen penny daily papers. In 1800 nearly all the news in the *Times* was a week old. Now, thanks to telegraphy and special correspondence, the press of the United Kingdom informs its readers of every important event transpiring at the uttermost parts of the earth, as soon as the dwellers in those places are themselves acquainted therewith.

Over and above this marvellous growth of the daily and weekly press, the century has practically seen the creation of illustrated journalism and of monthly reviews. Early in the century a few broadsheets stood for illustrated journalism; but since the foundation of the *Illustrated London News* in 1842 a whole mass of pictured papers has arisen. In recent years illustrated monthly magazines have entered the field; but in this department of journalistic enterprise the United States reigns supreme, for in typography, letter-press and illustrations, Harper's, Scribner's and the Cosmopolitan are unrivalled. Meanwhile the *Edinburgh*, *Westminster*

and *Quarterly* have been followed by a score or so imitators. The *Nineteenth Century*, *Contemporary*, *Fortnightly*, and so forth; while the *Athenæum*, *Saturday* and *Spectator* in solid weeklies, and *Knight's Penny Journal*, *Chambers's Journal*, *Once a Week*, in lighter weeklies, have scores of journalistic descendants.

With the exception claimed for America (illustrated monthly reviews) the press of the United Kingdom is immeasurably in advance of that of the whole world. Compared with it the press of France, Germany and Austria is, in matter and in form and in the value to be attached to its utterances, absolutely insignificant. On the other hand, it is remarkable that the daily journals of the colonies are very nearly equal to those of the United Kingdom, by which I mean of course as far as they go. Obviously they are far smaller and far less comprehensive. But I have had a personal acquaintance with the press of Australasia and Canada for many years, and with that of South Africa from my boyhood. I have often maintained, and I am prepared to do so again, that the leading articles in such journals as the *Cape Times*, *Cape Argus* and *Natal Mercury* are equal in scholarship, tone and literary form to those of any London paper, and well they may be when such men as Edmund Garrett and Sir John Robinson are responsible for them. I do not disparage other colonies; but the press of South Africa leads, probably because South Africa has been for some years the most immediately interesting and progressive portion of the British Empire.

Fortunately for me, the volume devoted to Fine Arts in the century has been entrusted to my friend Mr. William Sharp. Few writers better able to deal with the subject could be found. Were this not so, the theme would naturally tempt my pen; since it has engaged it largely since I first took it up as a public writer. I may say briefly that I do not think it can be maintained that there has been any large or uniform measure of art progress during the century, or that the people, as a whole, have become more appreciative of the beautiful. This fact is to be attributed in the main to the deadly influence of an institution, which, while posing as a national one, has devoted the prestige and position derivable from its royal foundation, government grants, accumulated wealth, and social advantages to aggrandising itself and its members; and has persistently neglected all outside and independent talent, not to say cruelly persecuted all and sundry who dared to follow a convention not approved by its President and Council, or who refused to bow the knee to its august majesty. So it has come to pass that almost everything that is vital and enduring in English art during the century, has come into existence independently of the fostering aid of the Academy, or actually in defiance of it. So far as the Academicians of the century go, the list contains a mass of names for the most part inglorious and destined to oblivion—many are already travelling there. Had the Academy really led the art development of the country, it would not have happened that

every great vitalising art movement has had its genesis outside it. The pre-Raphaelite movement, the *Plein-air* or Newlyn School, the New English Art Club or romanticist school, the Arts and Crafts Society. Among its great *refusés* some of the first painters of the century are to be numbered. Latterly, it is true, it has shown the wisdom of the serpent, and has ended, when finally convinced that they could not be suppressed, in enticing into its fold the men it has previously snubbed throughout a quarter of a century.

I have told the history of all this elsewhere, told it again and again. Mr. W. J. Laidlay, in his convincing book, "The Royal Academy: Its Uses and Abuses," has recently presented the case against the Academy in an unanswerable manner; since, being a trained barrister as well as an accomplished painter, he has not allowed passion or overstatement to vitiate the inherent strength of his case.

The art of the century in Great Britain has really been the art of one or two so-called schools: the Norwich, Nottingham, Newlyn, New English and Wealden schools in landscape art, or, to distinguish them otherwise, the romanticist, impressionist and naturalistic schools; and the pre-Raphaelite school, and romantic and imaginative school in figure-painting. To put it in another way, the art of England has been the art of a score or so of men, Turner, Constable, Millais, Rossetti, Watts, Lawson, Mark Fisher, Whistler, Burne Jones, Crane and Sir John Gilbert.

After a period of stagnation, sculpture has made, during the later Victorian era, a distinct advance; for Gilbert, at the end of the century, and Flaxman, at its commencement, join hands; but it cannot be said that sculpture owes anything material to the fostering care of the Academy. Water-colour, our national art, which had so many brilliant practitioners at the beginning of the century—Prout, Hunt, Varley, Girtin, Barret, de Wint, Fielding, Cox and Turner—languishes; and this is in a measure due to the studious neglect it has experienced at the hands of Burlington House. Architecture shows healthy vitality at the end of the century; but the Academy has done nothing to encourage it. The abominations of early Victorian furniture have given place to a pure and simple taste, though it is to be feared this change in taste is more a matter of fashion than of education and appreciation. So far as it goes, it is due to the Arts and Crafts Guild and kindred associations, and owes absolutely nothing to the Academy, which, calling itself the Royal Academy of Arts, concerns itself almost exclusively with oil painting, and in that has done its utmost to set up a vicious standard.

It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that outside the British Isles, where its influence is mainly social, the influence of the Academy is, artistically, a repressive influence. In the larger sense, despite its schools, it has no educational power. While nearly all our best painters are self-trained, or owe their training to France, the rising painters of

America, Canada and Australia are entirely indebted to Paris for their education, as any exhibition of their works conclusively proves. Obviously, however, the days are too young for any of the colonies to produce great painters.

To turn from the Academy to the National Gallery. That institution has on the whole been as well managed as the Academy has been badly conducted. Its curators have got together an extremely representative collection. The authorities of South Kensington Museum, despite the charges of jobbery, carelessness and ignorance in making purchases, more or less successfully sustained against them, have secured for the nation a highly valuable collection of works of art (and of course the term is used as embracing art in all its forms), at an exceedingly small cost to the public. The criticism of the lapses of its governing body has served to divert public attention from the far more heinous sins of omission and commission of the Royal Academy. As a matter of fact, it has done for the Empire a work of the utmost importance and value, a work which ought to have been performed by the Academy. There, with some reluctance, I must leave the matter.

Coming to the Drama, there can be no question that, so far as the moral atmosphere of the theatre itself is concerned, the efforts of Macready, Irving and others have improved it greatly ; although I doubt very much whether this improvement is not rather one of outward decorum than a radical and

an internal one. The members of "the profession" would now, as heretofore, deeply resent the imposition, should society expect them to be the custodians of its morals. We have heard a great deal about church and stage in recent years, and the bruiting about of a *rapprochement* between the two as joint agents of moral and intellectual elevation has brought a cynical smile to the lips of the worldly-wise. Seriously, it is absurd to contend that the modern stage, divided, as it has been, between the plays which deal too nakedly with evils one cannot advertise without increasing, and *opera bouffe*, in which the liberal exposure of feminine beauty and the singing of songs of doubtful propriety have been the principal attractions, has conduced to the elevation of public morals. A fierce side-light was thrown on the sincerity of the apologists and defenders of modern drama and its tendencies by the famous Ibsen controversy. No doubt Ibsen's plays were dangerous mental pabulum for persons of morbidly neurotic temperament; but they at least made vice ugly enough, and in a manner essentially dramatic inculcated the old lesson, "The wages of sin is death." This position I am prepared to defend in the last ditch. Still the stage, which likes its own melodramatic order of ethical play, tabooed Ibsen's works, and superficial critics of the Clement Scott brand declared they were nauseating, immoral, *sale*. These same critics are ready to applaud as divertingly innocent, plays of the ordinary Parisian type, in which intrigues of the fraternity

who go about neighing after their neighbours' wives are the alpha and omega of the plot.

Personally I am convinced that the stage is anything but a moral factor, either in its *personnel* or as an agent of amusement. It almost invariably has a distinctly lowering effect on its executive, the players, and especially is this so in the case of the female portion thereof, for the life from beginning to end is destructive of the finer moral fibre of woman's nature. The growing love of the people for the theatre, music hall and ballet,—their growing love of pleasure, that is to say,—has had a very bad effect on the moral and intellectual stamina of the nation. Much more might be said but we will let the matter drop. For the rest, it is only in the nature of things that since the love of the theatre has grown immeasurably and the actor and actress have become far and away the best paid, though they are often the least worked, of any artistic profession, members of the acting fraternity occupy a more and more prominent place in the eyes of the community.

As to the art of acting, the mimetic art, no doubt actors and actresses, as a whole, have become less "stagey" and more natural; but on the other hand, they have also become far less adaptable, with the result that the modern playwright is expected to write plays to suit certain companies, to bring out in his text, in fact, the little mannerisms of the respective players. Under these circumstances it is not remarkable that dramatic art has made very little progress. It has become more natural like its ex-

ponents; but modern drama lacks staying power. Like the novel and the newspaper article, it is the creature of the moment. With scarcely an exception, a play, however successful, lives for a year in London at the most, another two in the provinces perhaps, and then sinks into utter and irretrievable oblivion. The public which knows nothing of pictorial art, is scarcely better able to judge what constitutes real and abiding merit in a play. They go to see certain favourites well suited with parts. It is a personal affair. *Voilà tout!* Real progress in art education has, however, been made in one direction. We have produced no great musicians, but the people are far more appreciative of good music to-day than at any period of our history. London and the provinces, England and the colonies, know infinitely more about music than about any other art whatsoever.

In speaking of the many educational and elevating agencies, real or supposed, at work during the century, we must by no means forget foreign travel. At the beginning of the century, all young men of birth made the *grand tour*. Now almost every young Englishman, and Englishwoman too for that matter, belonging to the great middle class, even including the more prosperous retail traders, make themselves acquainted with some if not all, the great show places of Europe, and this is true of the colonies as well as of England. Messrs. Cook & Sons have proved a great blessing to the people in this regard. If it cannot be said that the impression permanently re-

maining from these tours is a very deep and lasting one, it may at least be said that the increased facilities for travel have opened the eyes of the people, and added greatly to their enjoyment.

So indeed have athletics, which may now be said, in one form or another, to have become the absorbing passion not only of Englishmen, young and old, the Empire over, but of Englishwomen too. The public schools and universities practically put athletics before scholastics. Cricket, foot-ball, golf, boating, yachting, swimming, cycling, have all their ardent votaries, while many young Englishmen make themselves proficient in one and all. Most Englishmen of the upper and upper middle classes are moderate riders, and so far as game shooting is concerned, fair shots. In the country districts of England and in the colonies the proportion of good horsemen and marksmen is of course much higher than in the urban districts of the United Kingdom. Rough riders the colonies can produce in thousands, as has been recently proved, but in Great Britain and even in the colonies, a small proportion only of the manhood of the Empire are expert shots. At home the defects of our young men in this respect became painfully apparent when recruiting for the Imperial Yeomanry was in progress. Up to the time of writing not half of the 10,000 men required for this service has been enlisted, though many tens of thousands offered themselves. Canada, in a lesser degree, has the same tale to tell. We may hope, however, that recent lessons will lead to these

defects being remedied. Meanwhile, in the absence of conscription, which of course must come, the athletic tastes of the people are the nation's salvation. These outdoor sports are grand correctives of that neurotic morbidity, born of too much nibbling at the fruit of the forbidden tree; a practice unhappily too prominent among the many unwholesome tendencies of the age. A word may be fittingly said here in approval of an excellent suggestion made some years ago by Mr. Astley Cooper, and strenuously fought for by that gentleman, that the British Empire should follow the precedent of ancient Greece and inaugurate, to take place at fixed periods, Pan-Britannic Festivals, Olympian games, in which the stalwart sons of the British Empire from province, colony and dependency, should take part. The idea has still to fructify, but fructify it will. It will be one of the results of the present comradeships in arms and in sports, of the sons of the Home-land and of the lands over-seas. A system co-ordinate with Imperial defence will be another result of this co-operation in South Africa. Meanwhile the recurrent trials of skill at Bisley, the Oval and elsewhere, in shooting, cricket and football, between home-born and colonial-born Englishmen, are steps in this direction.

The nineteenth century has been pre-eminently an age of sanitary progress; and in this progress the British empire has taken the lead. One of the volumes of this series will cover the ground, and I need not do more than indicate on the broadest lines the

course of that progress. Roughly it may be said that at the beginning of the century such attempts at sanitation as existed, when they were not based on superstition and quackery, were of a purely empirical nature. There was a direct tax on cleanliness, that is to say, on soap; and on light, that is to say, on windows. Drinking water was systematically, so to speak, polluted by drainage. During the Queen's reign one hundred and fifty millions have been expended on the water supply of the United Kingdom. In 1840 a Royal Commission was appointed to investigate into the sanitary condition of the great towns, with the result that London, Liverpool and Glasgow were found to be living on a substructure of pollution and disease. The courts and alleys of these cities were in the most woeful state of neglect, many of the inhabitants living in cellars. Thanks to the efforts of the Prince Consort, one of the ablest and most zealous of the century's social reformers, and Lord Shaftesbury, and later of Lord Meath, Lord Aberdeen, the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, and a whole host of philanthropic societies, something has been done to remedy these evils, though it is to be feared the evils are so colossal no more than the fringe of them has been touched. In any case, much remains to be done. In 1885 a committee was formed to study the question of the Housing of the Poor. The Prince of Wales, the Marquis of Salisbury, Sir Charles Dilke and Cardinal Manning were among its members. The efforts of this committee bore good fruit. That the sanitary condition of the

country has steadily improved, may be gathered from the fact that the annual rate of mortality in London was 1 in 23 in 1685, 1 in 40 in 1845, and 1 in 51 in 1885. For the whole kingdom the rate for 1891–5 was 1 in 53.47. The sanitary condition of the army and navy has wonderfully improved, and the medical and surgical staff of the former was winning in South Africa universal admiration, until our pride and confidence were rudely disturbed by certain ugly assertions the actual truth of many of which has now been established.

Of course this improvement in health is largely due to the marvellous discoveries of science:—the Listerian system of aseptic surgery, which is now practised "with almost as much scrupulousness in the Rhodesian as in the London hospitals," and the advance of bacteriology, which has taught us how to do battle with those minute organisms which carry the active principle of most zymotic diseases. Compulsory vaccination, the benefits of which are now threatened in the United Kingdom by concessions to feeble sentimentalists and quacks who have set themselves up against the unanimous opinion of the medical profession, has had much to say to the lessening of mortality from small-pox. Formerly this awful scourge carried off the population in thousands. Even to-day many persons survive who declare that in their youth every tenth person was pitted with small-pox. Earlier still, a woman, however homely-featured, not so disfigured, was accounted a beauty. Infant life, although still shame-

fully sacrificed by ignorant, careless or even criminal parents, is held far more precious than it was half a century ago; and the decrease of deaths in midwifery, due to the use of antiseptics and chloroform, has been most marked. At the moment I have mislaid the figures, but I know they are startling. Temperance advocates, tiresome as they become when they push their creed to extremes, such as advocating the closing of all public houses on Sunday, must be congratulated on the splendid work they have done in the interest of public morals and public health. They have yet to remove one of the scandals of our time, the tied-house monopoly; while for my part I hope to live to see the state rise superior to private interest and acquire the ownership and control of all the public houses of the kingdom. This I am firmly persuaded is the proper solution of the difficulty, and would prove far more effective than local-option or other forms of limited tyranny. Apropos, it is to be noted that go-ahead New Zealand has recently (1896) decided by a *plébiscite* against local-option, and against the abolition of the licensing principle.

In dismissing this matter, the health of the people, it is unfortunately necessary to add that, despite the marvellous general improvement in regard to sanitation, temperance, and the decrease of contagious diseases, there has been a marked increase in nervous maladies, and in cancer and insanity.

I must pass over the advance in pure science, especially in geology and astronomy, as being of a

general rather than a national character, and content myself by observing that the progress of applied science and its employment in industrial improvement have added vastly to the comfort and wealth of all parts of the empire.

Nothing perhaps has contributed more to the security and well-being of the people than the splendidly organised police who have now taken the place of the useless watchman of the Georgian era. The general use of gas in lieu of oil lamps in lighting the streets has also had an admirable effect in keeping criminals within bounds. It is a commonplace of contemporary journalism to proclaim that there has been a great advance in the administration of civil law. I find Canon Farrar among the eulogists. He echoes the old cry that Charles Dickens is to be credited with these reforms. Charles Dickens certainly did something in this direction and attempted more. All honour to him! But I cannot say that, so far as my knowledge and observation go, I find that there has been any substantial progress. The law is still the rich man's luxury—I might say folly. The congestion of business in the courts leads to such lengthy delays, the wise commonly settle their disputes in chambers outside their doors. The laws of our land are still as cryptic, contradictory and uncertain of operation as they ever were. I know from bitter experience how uncertain and capricious they are. When, as in a case of which I have personal knowledge, one of a thousand of its kind, a simple issue is decided in one way by the

Court of Chancery, the finding confirmed by the Court of Appeal to be overruled by the House of Lords; the business consuming three years and large sums of money, and resulting in worrying the litigant into his grave, when as I say I know this case to be typical rather than particular, I shall be understood when I say that I incline to the general belief of the multitude that law exists for the benefit of lawyers, and that the findings of the judges have about as much relation to equity as the ancient finding by the ordeal of burning, or the modern one of pitching a coin in the air. Meanwhile it cannot be said that much has been done to codify or to render intelligible the law at home or to assimilate the laws of the Motherland and the colonies, witness the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. On the other hand the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has grown into a useful body as a Court of Appeal for colonial litigants.

The real advance in the administration of the law has been in the direction of humanising the criminal law. I believe I have already remarked that early in the century persons suffered the last penalty of the law for the most trivial offences; the man who stole a loaf under the stress of keen hunger going to the gallows; youths and even children being put to death for minor crimes. There were a hundred or more capital offences on the statute book; and many of these laws far from being survivals of the middle ages, were actually placed there during the reigns of the first three Hanoverian kings. Now murder

is practically the only crime visited with death, even persons guilty of high treason generally escape with a lighter punishment. Since the Queen came to the throne, the number of persons executed in the United Kingdom does not greatly exceed one thousand. Flogging has been abolished except in extreme cases of robbery with violence. I am free to confess, however, that I for one hold that sentimentality has worked an ill service to the country in restricting the power of magistrates to order sturdy scoundrels the flogging they so richly deserve, though I freely allow that since corporal punishment has been discontinued, the people as a whole have become far more humane, though it is scarcely proved that the improvement is consequent thereon.

It is rather due, I think, to the strenuous efforts of a noble band of philanthropists and humanitarians. Plimsoll did much to stop the criminal practice of sending unseaworthy vessels to sea, a practice often associated with moral murder, since the insurance money was contingent upon the loss of the vessel. Lighthouses have been built everywhere. The lives of workmen have come under all manner of statutes designed to protect them. Again private, that is to say personal cruelty has diminished with public cruelty. Animals are far less commonly ill-used than in former generations; it is now many years since our streets were disgraced by the sight of dogs, their feet bleeding and torn, tethered to carts. The number of merciful men kind to their beasts has vastly increased. In fact the day has receded into

the far past when a peer who ventured to state in the House of Lords that animals had their rights as well as men, was received with ironical laughter. The sensitiveness of public opinion on the subject of vivisection is another evidence of the awakened conscience of the people to the sufferings of the weak and helpless.

The first volume of this series is devoted to the religious progress of the century, and I do not propose to deal at any length with that subject as affecting the British Empire exclusively. Else I should have something to say on the influence exercised by such writers and preachers as Professor Maurice, Dean Stanley, Baldwin Brown, Professor Drummond; on the vitalising Oxford movement; and the zealous efforts of the High Church party to get at the minds and consciences of the people. What I must perforce say on the religious progress of the British race will be said in the concluding chapter of this volume; but I will state here, that although I recognise that in the rural districts of England, especially in the sleepy southern counties, a great many slothful and even criminous priests still survive, I also recognise that the clergy of the Church of England, the Wesleyan and various Nonconformist churches, here and in the colonies, have done marvels for the people during the later Victorian era, and that they were never more zealous in good works than they are to-day.

Here, too, it is only just and proper to give due recognition to the Salvation Army, that marvellous

organisation working for human regeneration, which has arisen during, I think, the last twenty years or so; in any case, I can remember its beginning, for when a boy I chanced more than once to hear General Booth's addresses in a small hall in the East End of London. From this grain of mustard seed a huge organisation has grown, and to-day the Salvation Army bids fair to establish for itself a record as wonderful as that established by the Wesleyans in the eighteenth century. Its work has been truly national and imperial. General Booth's "In Darkest England" scheme of social regeneration not only aims at reclaiming, and does in a measure reclaim, the flotsam and jetsam of society at home, but establishes them in farms in the colonies. He and his zealous coadjutors have done and are doing a truly noble work.

I must say here, too, lest the time and space at my disposal prevent me from dealing with their achievements in detail, that the spread of British colonisation has not been the exclusive work of the great trading communities and their military servants, the East India company, the Niger company, the Chartered company, and so forth; any more than it has of the scientific explorers; but that the missionaries, despite some mistakes of method, have done their fair share of the work. The names of Livingstone and Moffat, apart from the honour due to them as the protagonists of great spiritual truths, are entitled to be added to those of Grey, Gordon, Rhodes, Taubman-Goldie, Stanley, Burton, Grant and Speke as builders of our empire.

But this chapter might be extended so as to exceed the limits of the whole volume and still be far from exhausting this branch of the subject. The social progress of the empire has so many aspects, that the reading of one set of facts seems to falsify the reading of another. Take, for instance, the question of class distinctions. There is perhaps no country so truly democratic as the British Empire, and Great Britain is probably, on the whole, as really democratic as any of the colonies; but throughout the length and breadth of Her Majesty's dominions place, honour, the highest titular distinction even, are open to all who can win them. Yet (and of course this is more noticeable in the home-land than in the colonies), there are few countries in which social divisions are so rigidly observed. At the moment there is an ugly exception to this rule: the consideration and attention paid by a certain section of the aristocracy to the mere millionaire. Perhaps the rigid observance of social differences does not make itself apparent to the foreigner, especially let me say to Austrians, because of the foregoing fact, the ridiculous premium put upon mere wealth, and the obtrusion everywhere of the awkward and pretentious newly-rich class. Moreover, there is a considerable amount of intermingling between the various grades of society, and a large amount of *bonhomie* in the bearing of the upper classes toward the lower. Still in their inner life these various grades of society continue to run in their own exclusive grooves, and this despite all that the facili-

ties for travel, levelling in dress, mixing in railway car and omnibus, equal electoral privileges, cheap education, and so forth, has accomplished during the century.

Nevertheless, there is a wonderful amount of cohesion and unity about the nation. There is comparatively little direct oppression of the poor by the rich, and as little personal and individual envying of the rich or high-placed on the part of the poor. Some one has said that, although socialism makes little or no headway, it is because the workers are so well paid; but that since five millions of these workers are entirely dependent on their weekly wage for subsistence, socialism would make rapid progress were a great war to put a stop to industry at home and supplies of food from without. This and many another ugly charge was brought against our people by an anonymous critic calling himself a Boer, whose letters to the *Times* and *Morning Post* excited a good deal of attention at about the time hostilities broke out in South Africa. These contentions remain to be proved hereafter, for the present war will scarcely affect the poorer classes, while as for socialism, it is literally a case of "duke's son and cook's son" fighting side by side in South Africa, and the fact that scarcely an ancient English family is unrepresented at the front, has made a deep impression on the people, so that the Radical outcry against the House of Lords, never popular with the masses, is certain to fall flatter than ever next time it is raised. The fact is the people's com-

mon sense tells them they have too much power, and they instinctively cling to the cog on their own wheels. For the rest, the existence of a well-to-do middle class, ambitious of rising, is another cementing force in the state. How greatly this class has grown in wealth may be gauged by one fact alone. In 1840 the banking power of the United Kingdom amounted to £132,000,000, or £5 per inhabitant; in 1895 it reached £1,111,000,000, or £28 per inhabitant. Of course this growth is in a measure due to the fact that the increased facilities for banking induce men to bank to-day who never thought of doing so a generation or two back.

In the foregoing rapid survey of the social progress of the people it has not been found necessary in every case to load the page with details and statistics as applying to each particular colony, inasmuch as, unless stated to the contrary, colonial development, in all the matters treated of, has been roughly concurrent with the development of the metropolis, though in some cases, of course, development has been confined mainly to the Motherland. In education, physical training, sanitation, political emancipation, the progress of mother and child has been practically simultaneous. Again, most of the colonies are suffering from the social evils consequent upon the rapid acquisition of wealth by certain sections of the community, just as the metropolis is. They are beginning already to feel the evil effects of the tendency of the people to herd together in the large towns; pauperism is

raising its ugly head in these towns, and the destitute alien, Polish Jews and other continental detrimentals, are beginning to flock into these big colonial towns as they have flocked for years into the East End of London. It has been shown that so far from the United Kingdom containing a large percentage of foreigners, it contains only about 200,000, or 6 per 1000 of the population, whereas France has 30 to each 1000 and Switzerland 77. The mischief is, however, that the foreigners who favour Great Britain with their presence are, at the present time, for the most part undesirable additions to its people, of the kind mentioned above. In the colonies, however, some of the most useful colonists are foreigners.

These, however, are side issues; the British Empire is a big place; and if rubbish is shot in at different corners of its vast area, no doubt it can be absorbed. Happily, for the British race, it has received far more good than harm from the foreign strains intermingling with it in the past and it is likely to continue to do so in the future.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ADVANCE OF WOMAN.

Of the position of women in the century what shall be said where there is so much to say? That this writer is in the fullest sympathy with women in their struggle to free themselves from subjection to unfair disabilities and unjust laws, and rejoices in the fact that so large a measure of success has crowned their efforts, need scarcely be said. In previous publications he has set down this sympathy over and over again, and need not recant anything he has written. Nevertheless, it is impossible, in taking a broad and general survey of the position of women to-day in the social economy of the nation, to suppress feelings of disappointment; if not alarm. I hasten to add that for the most part these unsatisfactory developments as touching a certain section, and it is to be feared a large one, of the female population of the country, cannot justly be regarded as the outcome of that larger measure of education and freedom women have enjoyed, but, on the whole, as in despite of it. With this matter we will deal later.

Irrespective of the foregoing consideration, I am free to confess that so far as the so-called new movement goes, it has led to certain ugly develop-

ments which one cannot contemplate without experiencing feelings of considerable disquietude. The fact is there are all sorts and conditions of modern women; and although all may be considered the outgrowth of one movement, the successful demand of advanced women for a larger measure of freedom and the conceded right to order their lives according to their own ideals and standards rather than those concerning them cherished by men, the types evolved are at the opposite poles of thought, and, for that matter, of action. So far as the eternal problems of sex are concerned, there are, for instance, women who seem to be far less troubled at the immorality of the average man than they are at the conventional disabilities under which they themselves suffer. They would appear not to direct their energies so much to insisting that human society should exact a higher standard of morality from man, and that the individual male offending it should be ostracised, but go about bewailing the injustice of visiting condign social punishment upon women for sins which in men are regarded as comparatively venial and are readily condoned. I think it was Lady Jeune who besought advanced women not to ruin their chances of elevating men by such clumsy tactics as these. Whatever may be man's sins, many well-meaning women seem to forget that man has, by the law of his being and the accumulated effect of ages of license,—for monogamy is a very recent social innovation in the evolution of our race,—infinitely greater temptation to sex-

ual sin than has woman. They seem to forget, too, that nature, against whose ruling it is foolish to contend, since no court of appeal can reverse her judgment, has decreed that woman, being the custodian, generation after generation, of the coming race, must preserve her virtue intact if that race is to advance, or, as might be said, survive.

Then there is that quite opposite, but almost equally misguided school of women thinkers in whom the study of sexual problems has bred a repugnance and horror of the laws of nature; a kind of immodest modesty, which, really the outcome of too much thinking on one subject, or of an unconscious pruriency, has bred in them a form of neurotic hysteria—often the infirmity of noble minds, for did not the great nature-lover, Richard Jefferies, by taking much thought about it, persuade himself that the horse, so far from being a lovely creature, was really a hideous misshapen brute, an unhappy conglomeration of ugly angles and harsh protuberances?

Two extremes of the emancipated woman have been mentioned, but between them there are all manner of gradations. The social purity woman with more zeal than discretion is one. We might for the purposes of this survey divide the advanced woman in the political arena from the advanced woman in the social arena. There are, of course, in the former category, many women or coteries of women, with more zeal than discretion. That women possessing the property or other qualification which

entitles men to vote should be debarred by their sex from exercising the suffrage, is an affront which they do well to resent. It is an insult to highly-educated and splendidly-endowed women, that the merest poltroon, the "waster," "bar-lounger," and a hundred thousand others, absolutely incapable of understanding what politics means, much less of forming judgments on intricate questions of policy, should be enfranchised merely because they are males; while women qualified in every way, save by sex, to choose members of parliament, should go voteless.

No fair-minded person, male or female, should withhold sympathy from women who are fighting for the removal of these political disabilities, and for my part I should like to see them removed; even, perhaps,—though I admit this would be a questionable concession, since you cannot obliterate sex,—the disability which excludes women from Parliament. In this connection it must not be forgotten that in regard to certain questions, women's first-hand opinions must be more valuable than when distilled through the brains of men.

That women in any large numbers should "take to politics" would in any case be nothing short of a national calamity. I recognise, of course, that all women cannot be wives and mothers, and cannot be concerned directly in a far higher sphere of government than a house of assembly affords, the ruling of a home and the moulding of the future generation. For the most part the business of party politics is

profitless and the old-fashioned among us think that even when a woman cannot be, or will not be wife and mother, she does the next best thing, when that is possible, in assisting in the ordering of a home indirectly, or, in other words, that the home in the eternal nature of things is the woman's province; that in the home she achieves her greatest triumphs and does her noblest work, and that women who deny this, or affect to see something subservient, subordinate or secondary in domestic duties, suffer from an unfortunate perversion of their natures. This however harmless in the individual would, if it became general, absolutely destroy human society, and send us all back to a condition far more degraded than elemental savagery.

Having said this, does it seem inconsistent to recognise as sighs of real progress the admission of women to such of the learned and artistic professions for which their particular genius may fit them? We may accept this as progress, because it is only just to half humanity; moreover society gains by the presence of a leaven of women in such professions as medicine and science, and in many trades. Since girls are now so generally employed in factories—seeing that the unfortunate revolt against domestic service, another symptom of the unsexing of women, makes employment in shops and factories the choice of two evils, the other we need merely hint at to indicate—female factory-inspectors are eminently needed. Indeed one might go through a long list of employments and offices

and show that in them women are not only well employed, but that their places could not be effectively filled by men. So far as the entry of women into the various trades or professions is concerned, most sensible persons are content to regard it simply as a matter of expediency and not one of principle. Obviously, too, it is a clear gain to humanity in the aggregate that so many avenues are now open to women, relieving them of that dependent state which obliged them to enter into loveless marriages, or to descend to another, and, in its consequences, still more brutalising form of prostitution. But since marriage for man and woman individually and the state collectively remains the most ideally desirable as it is rationally, the most healthful institution, it must be remembered that the lowering of wages and the competition for employment consequent upon the entrance of woman into various callings formerly filled by men exclusively, has been a fruitful cause, among other causes, of the steady falling off in the number of marriages, the deferring of marriage to late in life, and in the increase in those social evils which make for the degradation and ruin of a race.

As to the advance women have made during the century in personal liberty, it has been anything but inconsiderable. The Married Women's Property Act protects wives' property from the rapacity of unprincipled husbands. Then a far more reasonable interpretation has been put upon the law of divorce. A woman has now less difficulty in freeing herself

from a faithless and brutal husband who has been guilty of cruelty, should that cruelty have taken a moral rather than a physical form. The famous Clitheroe case secured for all women the legal right to live apart from husbands obnoxious to them. A good deal has been said and written as to the laws favoring the male at the expense of the female, and so after all the reforms of the century they still do, but in this case the woman has the advantage, since a wife can compel her husband to live under the same roof with herself and to provide for her maintenance —for this after all is the meaning of the law of conjugal rights—whereas a husband cannot compel his wife to live under his roof. In the foregoing, and in a score of ways besides, such as the custody of children, British women have been relieved in almost every essential from that condition of subjection to men in which they found themselves at the beginning of the century. They have also escaped from the leading-strings of men, in social matters, in a hundred ways. They move about in train, omnibus and cab, attend public places, become members of clubs, and so forth, without incurring reproach. They are the companions of men in all manner of sports and pastimes, in fact, all said and done, this comradeship between men and women, pushed dangerously and indeed mischievously far as it is in these days, is the great note of the century's advance, and marks more than anything else, the difference between the women of to-day and their great-grandmothers in 1800.

That women then found their compensation in scores of domestic accomplishments now too commonly neglected and despised, is true; but the self-indulgent habits of the men in all classes of society, save the middle class, must have made their companionship exceedingly distasteful to the wholesome-minded and pure-living women to whom they were mated. In those days women of the upper classes saw little enough of their men-folk, and when they did see them they were generally in a condition of befuddlement or worse. Then again what an advance is the modern girl, provokingly self-assertive and masculine as she tends in extreme cases to be, upon the simpering, head-on-one-side, butter-couldn't-melt-in-her-mouth miss, shy, coy and void of ideas, of the early Victorian age. But this advance has not been absolute; in some cases it has been accompanied by positive retrogression.

Nevertheless, take the century as a whole, British and American women may claim to have accomplished marvels in it; not only marvels for their own sex, but for humanity as a whole. Those sturdy pioneers of political progress and female enfranchisement, Susan Anthony, Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy, Mrs. Fawcett, Mrs. Mona Caird, Mrs. Biddulph Martin (Victoria Woodhull) have not yet seen the final crowning of their efforts in the recognition of their claim "that the help of politically-enfranchised women is needed for the upbuilding of the higher humanity that is to be," but they are likely to do so, while in New Zealand the electoral act of

1893 took the bold step of admitting women to the franchise, though they are not yet permitted to sit in the House of Representatives. Mrs. Somerville, Hannah More, and many another woman of light and leading who had to struggle against discouragement in their homes and in society to get themselves educated, would have rejoiced to see young women of the last and penultimate decade of the century, Miss Ramsay (Mrs. Butler), Miss Fawcett, for instance, taking the highest honours in open competition with men at the Universities. At Oxford and Cambridge colleges have been set apart exclusively for women. Then Elizabeth Fry, Hannah More and more recently Florence Nightingale, noble women working to raise the bankrupt, morally and physically, out of their evil state, or to nurse the suffering, may be regarded as the protagonists of thousands of altruistic women of to-day, toiling in the slums of cities in the cause of humanity, and especially in the interests of child-life ; and yonder on the battle-field proving themselves ministering angels indeed.

Undoubtedly there has been progress, splendid progress too, in the status of British women during the century, though, it would be idle to contend that this advance has been achieved without entailing some sacrifices.

At the commencement of this rapid and necessarily imperfect survey of the position and progress of British women in the century I indicated that as it seemed to me there was a canker in the very bud

of this advance. Its presence is scarcely to be regarded as an outcome of that advance; but rather as in despite of it, save in so far as the greater freedom and power women possess to-day than in any other period of the world's history—modern history in any case—mean freedom and power for evil as well as for good. And it cannot be denied that in all our large cities, here and in the colonies—London being the centre of everything naturally epitomises and focuses the evil—a body of women are in social power who, so far from making for the strengthening of men and for the uplifting of society, are working with all their might and main to weaken the country's manhood and debase society. I am not referring to the so-called Social Evil; the social evil I have in mind is of a far more insidious character. Women in thousands and tens of thousands are employing their wealth, opportunities, talents and such beauty as nature may have given them or art has been called upon to simulate, for no other purpose than their own and society's enslavement and degradation. Pleasure is their god, and dress their constant pre-occupation. The women of this class do not commonly belong to the real and abiding society of the country, the aristocracy, a word used in default of a better and more embracing one, though in the ranks of this class are to be found women of birth jostling with women sprung from nowhere. Education, good manners, far less any real refinement or intellectual vigour, are not in themselves passports to the "smart" set; they are

barriers. The one indispensable, practically the only passport asked for, is the power to spend money, no matter how come by, the willingness to be constantly whirling from one function to another, an easy laxity as to morals, and the absence of a fine standard of conduct, the presence of which might constitute its possessor a kill-joy, a spectre at the feast, its orgies, banalities and excesses. "Smartness" is the catch-word of the Sisterhood, and popularity is assured to any one who possesses what passes in this motley company for wit. Absolutely diseased as this great organism is, it possesses the qualities of a contagious malady. Its morbific energy is tremendous: while it has infected in no small degree the staple society above it, it has spread its corrupting influence downwards, and transmitted its vicious ideals of life—its love of dress, change and pleasure—to thousands of women, who, lacking the means to indulge them, pine in envious misery outside.

It is impossible to blink our eyes to the fact that "wealth with its wine and its wedded harlots," to use Tennyson's words, has exercised a most baneful influence on the fortunes of the country. Exacting what they are pleased to call pleasure as the normal condition of their lives, demanding constant excitement and change, and, like the Athenians of old, craving ever some new thing, these women have drawn after them not only their own men-folk, but men who ought to have been too proud to swell their train. The emasculation in high places, that

is to say, the revelations of neglected duties and carelessly discharged obligations, which recent events have disclosed, must in no small degree be attributed to these Delilahs. They have cut the locks of our Samsons and sapped their strength.

But it is said these excesses are good for trade. Just so. The heaped-up figures of our national wealth impress at first sight, but wealth may be purchased at too high a price. Unquestionably the society of which I have written is largely responsible for the commercial immorality of the age, the hasting to be rich and its concomitant scandals of which we have had a luxuriant crop in recent years. Moreover luxury and extravagance and the worship of externals can never be good for trade in the last event, seeing that they destroy the virility of the race, and end by making it powerless to compete successfully with the watchful and more self-controlled foreigner.

But there is hope for the future. If I read the signs of the times aright, the malady is passing. The worst sinners in this pinchbeck society of triflers are not the young women of to-day: they belong to another generation despite their more or less successful attempts to disguise the fact. That they make desperate attempts to inoculate their daughters with the poison which is in their own blood is only too true; but the open-air school is growing in power, and recent events have brought home, even to those women born into a world where the pursuit of "pleasure" is the only serious business of life, con-

ceptions of a higher and loftier aim and of simpler joys; and we may hope that the canker which for a whole generation has been sapping our national strength has submitted to the surgeon's knife.

CHAPTER XIV.

DEFENCE—THE ARMY.

A CYNIC might be pardoned for saying that whereas when the century opened no scheme of imperial defence had been so much as sketched out, its close reveals very much the same condition of affairs. Of course, as may be presently shown, such a statement would be a mere exuberance of rhetoric; but it is true nevertheless that so far as any system of united defence is concerned, the Empire is very little nearer that goal at which, during the last quarter of a century, scores of distinguished writers and speakers have been aiming, than it was in those dark ages of universal indifference before they took up their parable. In saying this, I am, of course, referring to actual achievement. I am sanguine enough to believe we are on the eve of great things, of which we may see the beginning, in any case, before the century closes.

It may be safely asserted that at the beginning of the century little or nothing in the way of colonial defence had been attempted. Canada's militia must be excepted, the militia which, despite local disaffection, stood by the Mother Country so loyally in 1812. Nevertheless the Empire has never been so safe from attack as it was in 1805, after Trafalgar; for France,

our only rival on the seas, was reduced by that battle to naval impotence. Nobody menaced our colonies then; nobody could menace them. Indeed, in looking back upon the history of those times, one can, considering our opportunities, only marvel at the moderation we shewed in acquiring colonies. We might have taken many more islands and mainlands had our maw for territory been really so rapacious as our critics have represented. In any case we might have provided ourselves with many more places of call between our several possessions without provoking the comment, or even attracting the attention of Europe. That we did not do so, is of course to be attributed to the fact, that, in the days before steam locomotion had revolutionized the conditions of naval warfare, these houses of call, coaling stations they have now become, were not so pressingly necessary as they are to-day.

But the mention of coaling stations reminds me that I am anticipating. Before we proceed to set forth what progress has been made in the business of defending British colonies individually, or in the direction of co-operative or federal defence, it will be well to deal with the progress made in the defensive and offensive services of the Mother Country; because, as a matter of fact, it is still to the army and navy of the parent country—or as I should now perhaps say, it is still to that navy—the colonies look for protection in the hour of their need.

At the beginning of the century the British army is stated to have numbered 168,000 men, and to have

cost the country about 18 millions for its annual maintenance. In 1810, we were employing a great many foreign troops, and the total of the forces receiving our direct pay amounted to 300,000 men. In the last year of the war this total was maintained, but the sum voted for the support of this army had risen from £26,748,000 in 1810 to £39,150,000 in the year of Waterloo. After the peace, the strength of the British army was rapidly reduced. Its numbers stood at 88,100 in 1820 and 89,300 in 1830. When the Queen came to the throne in 1837, the actual strength of the regular army was just over 100,000 men, though on paper it stood at 111,200 men. In 1818, our army reached its minimum during the century, numbering 80,000 men, the cost to the country then being some 6½ millions sterling.

At the conclusion of peace, in 1815, the nation seemed to have been impressed with the belief that there would be no more war, or that in any case the contingency was so remote it was useless to spend large sums upon the services. Although it would seem that the Duke of Wellington himself shared, in some measure, this opinion, in any case he was prouder of having secured, as he hoped, universal peace than of his military glory, he naturally did his best to prevent the army from dwindling into nothingness, though it was little he could do. The present Commander-in-chief, Lord Wolseley,* is right in attributing the revival of interest in the army to a series of important events which set the people

* In 1900.

thinking seriously about the safety of their country. The first determining cause may be said to have been the threatening attitude of the French army, many of whose officers, late in the fifties, openly declared their eagerness to lead an attack on England. The Queen's diary shows that she shared the general mistrust of Louis Napoleon, who, on the occasion of Her Majesty's visit to Cherbourg with the Prince Consort, made it obvious to her that he intended the display of ships and guns as a menace to her Kingdom. The Austro-Prussian war and the Franco-German war completed the work which Napoleon III.'s uncertain attitude began, and England became more and more seriously dissatisfied with her army. The events of 1859, the French menace that is to say, led to the volunteer movement which has given us a citizen force of 265,000 men,* who may be relied upon to render an excellent account of themselves should they ever be called upon to defend the kingdom. Of course in saying this one is speaking of their spirit and soldier-like qualities. With their limitations, I shall deal later. There was another cause which must not be forgotten why the English people became dissatisfied with the small and utterly inefficient army, which for forty years after the conclusion of peace in 1815, had appeared to them to be sufficient for their needs. The Crimean war brought the fact home to the

* This was the full establishment in January, 1900. Actual numbers were about 222,000, reduced to about 213,000 by absence of several thousand in South Africa.

entire nation that it had been grossly deceived as to the efficiency of its army, and showed it that of military organization there was none. This knowledge, and the lamentable breakdown of our army, filled the soul of the nation with gall and wormwood. As Lord Wolseley says, it was a sad joke to speak of this force of some 30,000 men as an army at all; since it was disgracefully deficient in artillery, in transport equipment entirely so, and had no civil department worthy of the name. Our immediate ancestors have told us of the miserable plight to which these brave men were reduced. They had to go through the interminable routine of winter trench work without proper food or clothing; the food was abominable, and the boots turned out to be so much brown paper; in some cases children's boots were sent out. We very nearly came to utter grief; and that we managed to secure a technical victory over the enemy, is only to be explained when we remember the Russian army was the poorest of poor stuff.

Bearing in mind the miserable materials, not in a physical but in every other respect, which went to the making of our army, both as to officers and men, during the half century or so between 1815 and 1860, the marvel is that we were able to give so good an account of ourselves in the various wars, great and small, in which we were engaged during those years. It is true we came by disaster in the Afghan wars, a disgraceful page of our history; while, on the whole, we have had small reason to be proud of our

military achievements during that half century in China, India, New Zealand, Burmah and South Africa. Lord Wolseley does not mince matters. Condemning the system under which our soldiers were trained and sent into the field, he is more severe still on the faults, not as to bravery, of course, but as to military knowledge and soldierlike capacity, of their leaders. The nation became exceedingly impatient under all these exhibitions of incompetence; and although the splendid achievements of our army in India, in suppressing the Sepoy rebellion, did something to restore its equanimity, the terrible losses entailed, and the serious mistakes made throughout those three years of hard fighting, would not permit the people to dismiss the army from their minds. Their cogitations bore fruit later.

Although I have examined many works and official statements dealing with the conditions of the British army in the period under review, I find that Lord Wolseley, in his famous essay on the army,* has set forth all the essentials of the case, so that in the two or three pages to follow I have in a large measure merely paraphrased, condensed and annotated his work. It seems, as I have already said, that, after 1815, the people insisted on something very much like general disarmament. They were sick of war, and only consented to the retention of the standing army when it was explained to them that India could not go undefended; that our colo-

* Ward's *The Reign of Queen Victoria*, Vol. I.

nists must be protected from the savage races among whom they were settled; and that soldiers were essential for the maintenance of law and order at home. It must be remembered that our present police system was not called into existence until 1829. The Duke of Wellington's immense personal prestige and influence were exerted to the utmost to keep the army up to a respectable footing as to numbers; but he had to hide the regiments away in small detachments throughout the United Kingdom and the colonies. The forces were ridiculously armed, sometimes not armed at all. As to the men's character and conduct it was such that the Duke could write about the army as follows: "The man who enlists into the British army is, in general, the most drunken, and probably the worst man of the village or town in which he lives." They could, said Wellington, only be improved "by discipline and precept and the example of the old soldiers." Sweepingly and quaintly enough, he added, in condemnation of the common soldiers, that if they were not themselves in the degraded class, "they deserved to be placed there for some action or other twenty times in every week." In fact the Duke spoke of and regarded our soldiers, as "the scum of the earth." His only system with them was corporal punishment, flogging for every offence. It would appear that this great general had not even that mitigated affection for the men under his command which his officers had, a feeling similar to that entertained by them for their horses and their

dogs. But it never occurred to these officers, much less to the Duke, that, by exercising a greater measure of liberality in housing, paying and feeding the soldier, by treating him as a fellow-human being, a better class of recruit might be obtained for the army. The Commander-in-Chief and his *entourage*, in fact the commissioned officers of the army generally, not only did not believe in such measures, but opposed with all their power any attempt to proceed along such lines, regarding them as dangerous innovations.

Sir Charles Napier endeavoured to get in the thin end of the wedge by urging his brother officers to popularise the army by reducing the term of service to seven years. The prejudice in favour of life enlistment was very strong; and it was not until 1847 that enlistment for a period of ten years was legalised. This was done, as it was found impossible to procure the 10,000 recruits required annually, notwithstanding that the enlisting sergeants were encouraged to stupefy the yokels with drink, and in that condition to excite their imaginations by lying stories as to the advantages of the service. In point of fact the system was merely a variant on the obnoxious impressment system. Since troops were nearly all their time abroad, for the most part in unhealthy climates, huddled together in utterly insanitary barracks, their moral, intellectual and physical well-being entirely uncared for, burthened with a ridiculous dress which in hot countries conspired to carry large numbers off from sunstroke and apo-

plexy, and since those soldiers who were married with the consent of their colonels, had to submit to seeing their wives and daughters lodged in the same apartments with the single soldiers, while those who married without leave were in a state even more evil, there is small wonder that the soldier came to be regarded as a social pariah, as in fact, a pestilential criminal allowed partial liberty in consideration of his engaging to fight the country's battles. The late Prince Consort—of whom let it be once more said that to him England and the Empire owe a debt of gratitude, as the foremost social reformer of his day and generation, which can never be repaid, for this noble, disinterested and cruelly misunderstood and maligned public servant, sealed his service with his life—took up the cause of the soldier with that singleness of purpose which characterised his every act, and as an earnest of reforms to follow, secured for him that in his married state he should be segregated from the celibate portion of his regiment.

As to the officers, doubtless they improved with the improved manners of the times, following those days when the influence of the Prince Regent (George IV.) gave the note to the tone of society. The Duke of Wellington had a very poor opinion of the mental equipment of the gentlemen holding the Queen's commission serving under him. Brave, honourable, ready to lead their men anywhere they were. This no one could or can deny; but they had rarely, if ever, any knowledge of the art of war, save only in so far as it consisted in moving their

men about correctly in the barrack yard. It is true that between the years 1815 and 1854 they enjoyed scant opportunities of learning the art of war in the field. So that when we found ourselves face to face with Russia in the last mentioned year, our army was discovered to be deficient in almost every quality which goes to make an effective fighting machine. Courage, physical strength and capacity for prolonged endurance it possessed; these were its sole endowments. Lord Wolseley says that in the early part of the Queen's reign, "the army was contemptible in numbers, hidden away in small bodies all over the earth, its rank and file as described by the Duke of Wellington, its officers ignorant of military science; badly equipped and absurdly dressed, destitute of those civil departments without which no army can exist in the field, it was indeed in a pitiable condition in all respects." So far as I can judge, Lord Wolseley's description does not err on the side of exaggeration, nor can he be gainsaid when he declares that, had the French landed 100,000 or even 50,000 men in the Thames or on the South coast, our army could not have saved London from capture.

We had no forts worthy the name. Visitors to the South coast are familiar with those inverted mustard-pot buildings, Martello towers, which were to prove our salvation in the case of invasion. It is, in fact, only in recent years that we have given anything like adequate attention to the defence of our coasts, or of our capital. Our ancestors would

have opened their eyes at that enormous fort and place of arms at the top of Reigate Hill, within a stone's throw of the old Pilgrim's Way between London and Canterbury, which I was permitted to inspect some little time since. I mention it merely to show that at last we are becoming alive to the serious increase in the risks of invasion to which the inventions of modern science have laid us open, and that in quite recent years we have taken some steps to provide against them. But this by the way.

The decay of the army in those earlier days of the century was paralleled by the decay of the militia, which, until its re-organisation in 1852, had become an entirely effete and contemptible limb of the service. The Yeomanry were in little better case.

General Sir John Burgoyne's spirited paper, addressed to Lord John Russell and his colleagues, came as a bomb-shell to the nation. He reminded the government that, after we had garrisoned Ireland, India and the colonies, we could not put more than 5,000 to 10,000 men into the field for the protection of Great Britain; that in Great Britain and Ireland we had not enough field guns for 20,000 men, and that even our dockyards would succumb to a sudden and reasonably capable attack. The Duke of Wellington backed up Sir John Burgoyne. This was in 1846. The warning fell on deaf ears. Lord Palmerston was alone attentive, but it was not until 1859 that he was able to put the plans for national defence, he then formed, into execution. In that

year, he succeeded in getting through a vote for 7½ millions for fortifications.

Then followed the great Volunteer movement of 1859–60, stimulated by that far-seeing patriot, though he was an adopted and not a born son of England, who shared with the Queen the responsibilities of government. It was the Prince Consort who drafted the "Instructions to Lords Lieutenant," which were the regulations upon which the volunteer force was raised and organised. Now there can be no doubt that the existence of this force—which, starting with some 120,000 men, has gone on rapidly increasing in numbers and efficiency until it now reaches some 265,000 men (nominal strength) and in efficiency is, so far as the conditions and limitations under which it labours will permit, in a most satisfactory state—has often enough caused our enemies to pause before committing themselves to an attack upon us. Space will not allow us of going into the history of this patriotic force, which now, after being subjected to the desipient banter of *Punch*, the snubs of the War Office, the sneers of the Army, and the neglect of the people, has won its way to the affection and respect of all classes of the community.

The Commander-in-Chief is as unstinting as anyone in his praise of this magnificent citizen force, which in a manner entirely magnanimous has come forward at its own charges, in expenditure of time and money, to stand between the invader and the hearths and homes of Englishmen. "Of the three

great reigns," says Lord Wolseley, "when the throne was occupied by a Queen, that of Elizabeth is best known to the mass of the English people to-day in connection with the destruction of the Spanish Armada by the gallant Drake and the loyal Howard. The reign of Queen Anne will be for ever memorable as the era of England's greatest power, when no hostile fleet could keep the sea, and when the fame of Marlborough overshadowed Europe. . . . In like manner, I believe the reign of England's best and greatest Sovereign, Queen Victoria, will be remembered for all time as that when the English people called the Volunteer force into existence to redress the military ignorance and incapacity of our political rulers." * The Volunteer movement bids fair to accomplish what Lord Wolseley prophesied for it.

The force is now practically incorporated, linked, that is to say, with the regular army, volunteer battalions forming a part of each of the great territorial regiments into which the infantry is now divided. The mention of these territorial regiments reminds me that among the many useful reforms of late years, the dividing of the forces into territorial units has had a most beneficial effect in increasing that spirit of local patriotism which should always run concurrently with the larger patriotism of a citizen to his native country, and that largest patriotism of all, in the case of a Briton, his patriotism to the Empire. Local *esprit-de-corps* is a most

* This was written in 1886.

healthful spirit to inculcate, and the friendly rivalry between our various regiments which their direct association with the county in which they are recruited has produced, cannot but have a beneficial effect on the *morale* of the army as a whole. The affiliation of the volunteers and militia with the regular army, binds together the fighting men of each county in so many local centres.

No army reform in recent years—it took effect in 1870—was more hotly contested than the abolition of purchase. It was contended by the opponents of this scheme that the substitution of competitive examination for the extremely primitive method of selection and advance previously obtaining, would give the army over to a race of be-spectacled students, strong in book learning but weak in martial qualities. The idea is ridiculous, though the education of our officers leaves much to be desired, but it is obvious that a man devoid of martial spirit is far less likely to attempt to enter the army when he has to climb the barrier of a stiff examination, than by the easy, royal road of a money payment down. The abolition of purchase has in no way altered the status of the *personnel* of the army, since it is officered from about the same classes as formerly, and from about the same sections of these classes. The titled and landed classes still supply the bulk of our officers, while the abolition of purchase has tended to decrease the intrusion into the army's ranks of the sons of base-born and newly-rich vulgarians, a class it is highly desirable to ex-

clude since they are incapable of gaining the respect of the men put under them, who have a keen scent for upstarts from their own ranks in life; and being fighters, men of primitive instinct free from the commercial bias of the ordinary money-worshipping Briton, are very naturally in no way impressed by the mere accident that wealth has removed these upstarts into another sphere of life.

That the army is not overrun by men of scholarly attainments in whom the love of fighting is imperfectly developed, is due to the fact that it offers no rewards to the man who has to make his profession his living. The pay of officers is entirely inadequate to support them, and it is useless for a young man without means to aspire to a commission. No doubt this state of things has its grave disadvantages in excluding from the army many a man who would be an acquisition to it; but it also excludes the ordinary aspirant from the ranks of the middle classes, desirous of entering a profession merely as a wage-earning one.* Now this class of person does not make a good officer or a good soldier.

* Mr. George Wyndham declared some time ago in the House of Commons that it was a matter of common knowledge that living cost an officer £150 a year in a line regiment and £500 a year in a cavalry regiment over and above his pay. Undoubtedly far too high an expenditure on social amusement is expected from an officer; usage makes it impossible for him to avoid this expenditure if his life in his regiment is to be at all tolerable. The German officer is studying his profession during the time a British officer is compelled to dissipate in frivolities.

Both officers and men are really *giving* their services to the country. Military enthusiasm, like artistic, literary and political enthusiasm, must rise above the mere desire, and must not be fettered by the need, to fill the pocket. Again, it is essential that the army should be officered by men born and bred on the land, used to exercising authority in their own villages, and skilled in all forms of field sports. In recent years young men of this class who have not the advantage of being possessed of private means, have found ample scope for their activities in the various scratch forces recruited for service in the colonies, especially of course in the African colonies, while the improved status of the regular imperial army has made it possible for men of good birth and bringing-up to enlist into the rank and file in the hope of securing commissions by and bye, a proceeding which has had a most healthful influence in further improving the tone of the service. I may say in dismissing this subject of purchase that the war in South Africa has finally set at rest, although the Egyptian campaigns had already done that, any doubt as to the class of officer secured to the country under the competitive system. The bravery of the officers engaged in suppressing the Boer rebellion is as conspicuous as it was in any campaign in which we have been engaged.

As to the men, they have again given token of the fine stuff they are made of; there has been no deterioration in physique or endurance, far from it. In discipline, though flogging has been done

away with, there has been marked improvement, while, as between officers and men, the bond of feeling, I might almost say friendship, is far stronger than at any previous epoch of our history. As to physique and bravery, the correspondents of the London papers have testified to the splendid account the British forces, home and colonial, have given of themselves throughout the war. This is what a Canadian war-correspondent, who witnessed the battle of Belmont, has to say of Tommy Atkins. "How the British scaled the steep kopjes is a mystery. They fought their way up yard by yard, and orders from their officers were unnecessary. . . . In face of a terrific fire the last kopje was climbed, and after a five minutes' taste of the bayonet the Boers fled." Mr. Shaw adds that he was struck by the deadly earnestness of the rank and file.

And how have these results been obtained? By the measures already detailed and by others. Education has done much, the general education of the people. I have said some hard things in the preceding chapter, not against education, but against foolish systems; among its gains must be reckoned that every private in our ranks knows now exactly why we are fighting and what we are fighting for. He knows that the war is just and necessary; that it was forced upon us by the treachery and ambition of a corrupt oligarchy. He knows that conquest means bread and butter for himself and for his brothers and cousins at home. He knows that the Boer has presumed to regard him as an

effete creature whom he had only to meet to trample in the dust. In brief he has the heads of the whole business by heart. Hence he is fighting in a cause he thoroughly understands and approves, and not as in past years for a cause he did not fully understand, and so far as he did understand had his misgivings about. To-day the conviction has sunk deep into the minds and consciences of the man-in-the-street—here and in the colonies—that Great Britain never goes to war but for a just cause, and that when there is any other way of securing that cause, she never resorts to fighting.

We have, in fact, treated our soldiers since Lord Cardwell started on reforming the army, as human beings, and we are reaping the reward. Wellington's army was a rabble as compared with the well-ordered force Lord Roberts had under his command. Wellington had to bully and intimidate his men into fighting; the like tactics had to be pursued in the Crimean war. Mr. Shaw, quoted above, pertinently remarks, that the men had not to wait for their officers to order them on. Why? Because they responded to the chivalry of those officers whom they knew and respected, and because they knew that those officers would not order them to do anything they were not willing to do themselves, and that they invariably put themselves in the fore front of danger.

The army has been completely metamorphosed during the century. What sort of an understanding would such a bard as Rudyard Kipling have en-

joyed in 1810? In 1810 it would have been vain to have counted upon every man in the British army grasping the significance of such an issue as that now being determined in South Africa. But I have assured myself from personal interrogatories that the ordinary private understands Kipling; and that he understands that in South Africa we are engaged in a struggle, the successful issue of which means the consolidation of the Empire, or in the case of defeat, the decadence of the Empire. So far then have the sweeping changes of the century justified themselves in the *personnel* of the army.

I have dealt with the principal of those changes and reforms, but their name is legion. Short service has given us an effective reserve, though still dangerously insufficient in numbers; localisation has given us a *nidus* so to speak in which we can breed the soldier in every county; instruction, general and military, has humanised him, and made him take an intelligent interest and pride in his calling. He has come to understand that he can, on the whole, do better for himself in the army than in most of the callings open to him; and that so completely has the feeling of employers of labour changed for the better as the soldiers themselves have changed for the better, during the last quarter of a century or so, that service in the army is no bar, as it once was, but the reverse, to employment when the soldier joins the reserves. Moreover, he now knows, despite the maladroitness of the Patriotic Fund Commissioners and other organisations, that his wife and

family will not have to want while he goes to fight his country's battles nor to starve if he should go under. Again, instead of being flogged or imprisoned should he happen to get too much beer, or in other ways prove that he belongs to a race fallen grievously away from its lost Eden days, a reasonable fine is made to meet the case. In every respect, in fact, the soldier has been lifted bodily on to a higher platform.

Of course all this improvement in the *personnel* of the army and this considerable increase in its numbers have not been achieved without entailing a heavy cost on the nation; but the nation, that part of it, that is to say, which pays, can well afford the price. Mr. Mulhall tells us that in the sixty years from the beginning of the Queen's reign to the year of the Diamond Jubilee, the annual cost of the army and navy has increased from under 16 millions to 40 millions or so, or to 20*s*. per inhabitant. In the forty-five years between 1850 and 1895, the military forces had quadrupled. In the first year they were 159,000, in the last year 655,000 and this irrespective of the Anglo-Indian army and the Royal Irish Constabulary. The maintenance of our regular army, exclusive of pensions and auxiliary forces, which amounted to 7½ millions in 1850 reached the total of 13½ millions in 1895, or £62 per man against £44 in France and £41 in Germany.

It is impossible in the compass of this work to deal with the tithe of the aspects of this branch of our national advance, but I must guard against con-

veying the impression that the progress toward the frank recognition of our responsibilities and making due provision for them in regard to this arm of our defence, has been steady, undeviating and continuous; while I shall presently show, indeed every Briton is now acquainted with the fact, that much remains to be done before our army can be regarded as in any way coming up to the standard necessitated by the condition of Europe, or by the requirements of our Empire. In this, as in kindred matters, we have had hot-and-cold fevers, and parochial-minded politicians and faddists masquerading as statesmen, have succeeded again and again in checking that progress toward national sanity, which, on the whole, has distinguished the last half of the nineteenth century. It must suffice for me to say now that, exclusive of local forces raised and maintained in the colonies, the *personnel* of the British army in 1898-99 was returned at 742,421 men, made up as follows: Regular army (at home and in the colonies) 171,394; in India 73,102; Reserve 83,050; Militia 139,000; Yeomanry 11,891 and Volunteers 263,963.*

I am free to admit that, despite the marked improvement to which I have testified, I do not consider we have attained to anything approaching an ideal condition of military defence; nor is it likely that the ordinary methods of increasing the army, that is to say any considerable addition to our regular

* These figures are subject to deductions.

forces, can be entertained as a feasible proposal. Save in times of emergency it would be difficult to persuade the people to pay for this extra insurance fund, nor would it effectually meet the case should they consent to do so. Although the rapid mobilisation and fairly expeditious despatch of the army sent to South Africa has given some satisfaction, for it is a big business unique in the history of the world to despatch 200,000 troops by sea and land 7,500 miles from their home, the strain put upon the military defences of the Empire has been such as to oblige the nation to look its position full in the face. It is assumed that we shall never again undertake anything in the shape of those military enterprises on the continent of Europe which throughout the middle ages and the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the commonplaces of our national life. We may hope not; but surely to assume this in the face of what is going on around us is somewhat rash. It is perhaps not likely, as at one time we had every reason to fear to be not only likely but inevitable, that we shall be called upon to defend Canada against her powerful southern neighbour. The marked improvement in Great Britain's relations and Canada's relations with the United States, now leaves little or nothing to be desired in these directions. But although it may not be easy to foresee any situation which would make so great a demand on our military forces, outside the British Isles in any case, as the demand now being made on them in South Africa, it is impossible to forecast

the future, and difficulties may arise of which at present we have no kind of warning.

I am the more justified in saying this when I remember how incredulous, until the last moment, all our political leaders were, as to the designs and intentions of the Boer Republics of South Africa, and how completely our Government was taken by surprise as to their strength, military equipment and resolution. Persons who had made a lifelong study of the matter knew that these Republics were aiming, and had been aiming for years, to establish, peacefully if possible, but forcibly if necessary, the Dutch hegemony of South Africa. But neither our rulers nor the people could be made to recognise the true state of the case, or to prepare beforehand to meet and checkmate these sinister designs.

At a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute held on April 19, 1898, when Colonel E. T. H. Hutton introduced for discussion the subject of a co-operative system for the defence of the Empire, Sir Charles Dilke said, that with the exception of Canada, invasion of any of the other colonies, calling upon the employment of land forces, was not a very practical danger. Sir Henry Norman went further. "In regard," he said, "to military assistance of colonies from the United Kingdom, I confess I do not see any circumstances that could arise to render that necessary, except perhaps for Canada. *None of the other colonies have frontiers abutting on any civilised power.*" Possibly Sir Henry would say he did not recognise the South African republics

as independent states, a valid plea technically, especially as regards the Transvaal, but practically a useless plea, as the Transvaal has always claimed to be an independent state. Perhaps the gallant general would say that he did not regard the Transvaal and Free State as civilized powers, which again would be a quibble. As regards the Transvaal, there would be much to be said in an academic sense for such a plea, though as touching the Free State, it enjoys an admirable system of education; perhaps the best in South Africa; and it is in every respect a civilised, though a grossly befooled community. Moreover, in the sense in which Sir Henry Norman spoke, both powers are highly "civilised," in that they are both able to bring into the field men trained in modern warfare, and possessing every instrument of destruction known to modern science.

Within eighteen months of these confident assertions what do we find? We find the northern parts of Cape Colony and Natal overrun by the burghers of these Boer states. We find that it requires the whole military force of the Empire, or in any case so much of that force as it would be in any way prudent to withdraw from the British Isles and from India, Egypt and certain other dependencies, is needed to suppress this Africander rebellion. Thanks to the forethought of our rulers, and indeed to a measure of great good luck on our parts, we have so far been able to go to work to quell this rebellion without being confronted by European

opposition. We have seen something like a *rapprochement* between England and Germany, which the present writer for one hails with intense satisfaction, seeing that an Anglo-German understanding has been the dream of his life. He says this although he is perfectly aware that hundreds of Germans are fighting for the Boers; and knows the whole history of the German conspiracy to oust England from South Africa—a conspiracy nearly twenty years old and having numerous ramifications. All this, however, unlovely though it be, is the natural outcome of Lord Granville's foolish attitude toward Prince Bismarck, and to the fact that when a young and vigorous nation is "on the make," it will foregather where it thinks it sees opportunities of aggrandising itself at the expense of a rival and predecessor it thinks is about—thought rather, is about—to go the way of Spain and Portugal. We have acted this part in earlier years, and are not in a position to criticise Germany. As a matter of fact had Germany been nationally and officially hostile, instead of merely privately—journalistically and commercially—the task before us in South Africa, arduous as it is, would have proved one of the first magnitude. But that by the way.

Here, then, a situation of great national stress, and one which might have proved a situation of great national peril, has sprung upon us, I mean upon the nation generally, like a thief in the night. It is not my business to deal with the future, but in dealing with the question of national defence, so far as the

century goes, I think I already see that the lesson of the last few months has sunk deep into the minds and consciences of the nation. The dispatch of upwards of 200,000 men * to battle-fields, seven thousand and more miles off, is, as I have already said, unprecedented in the history of the world. The number is so large that almost every Englishman has a connection, near or distant, at the front; while British subjects in the colonies have come to feel the pulse of the great imperial undertaking to which our race is committed by reason of the contingent every colony has furnished to assist in the enterprise. By these means the martial spirit of the race has received a powerful stimulus, and men have come to ask themselves, the Empire over, why the business of defending that Empire should be delegated to the few, why every man within it should not take his fair share in providing for that defence. In other words, and I am speaking now of course for the metropolis of the Empire primarily, the general conscription of the nation, in which policy some of us have been ardent believers and advocates all our lives, should be longer delayed. The nation having gone some distance toward providing itself with an effective army, and becoming seriously conscious of its inadequacy for all our possible needs, is showing everywhere a disposition to face the issue. A very much larger standing army is out of the question; it might menace freedom, while the expense would be crushing. Why then should not

* 250,000 since this was written.

every male give two or three years of his youth to the service of his country, and thus ensure that every Englishman shall be able to stand up in its defence if called upon to do so. It is scarcely manly to delegate one's duty in this respect to another, a system savouring too much of the Chinese principle whereby a person possessing means, sentenced to death, pays another to act as his substitute. The old bugbears that conscription is against the spirit of the people; that it is un-English; that it entails a serious loss on the nation to withdraw young men from money-making pursuits in the early years of their lives, are showing themselves to be nothing better than bugbears. On the contrary, it is coming to be seen that it is distinctly un-English to compel—for it comes to that—a small minority of the people to do the country's fighting for it, while it is also seen that the gain to the manhood and efficiency of the people from those three years' drill would be so great that no mere words can exaggerate it. The race would be permanently improved. In these days when statistics show that marriage is entered into, and properly so, at a later date by the males of the community than in earlier times, those few years of drill and discipline, inculcating habits of self-control, exactitude and routine, would have a beneficial effect on the future of the individual, and of the race, which would entirely outweigh any supposed loss, personal or national, resulting from the sacrifice of a few wage-earning years. The suppression of the Boer rebellion will

be an incalculable blessing to South Africa, to Africa as a whole. But if the war which accomplishes that result should also, as I believe it will, bring—not immediately of course—the people to accept those responsibilities of citizenship they have hitherto avoided, should induce them to stand up as a man, soldiers of the Queen, then its indirect benefits will be even greater than its direct and apparent ones. And I would say here that one of the most frequently heard objections to conscription is that our Empire being disjointed, conscripts would have to leave their homes to defend the colonies. For my part I do not believe the spirit of the colonies would permit this; though of course it would be for each colony to decide whether it would individually adopt conscription. Again, in France, a certain number of conscripts are always found ready to volunteer for service outside the Motherland.

Since the foregoing was written a few weeks since, much has happened to open the eyes of the laity to the imperfections of our army, its organisation and training, and to justify the contentions of that small band of army reformers, in and out of Parliament, Mr. Spenser Wilkinson, Mr. Arnold Forster, Sir Charles Dilke, that our army was not organised in times of peace so as to make it an immediately effective force in times of war. It must be singularly galling to these army reformers, who have been too generally regarded as faddists, alarmists, pessimists and busybodies, to find at the eleventh

hour many of their fifteen-year-old recommendations glibly taken over without acknowledgment by Lord Lansdowne and Mr. George Wyndham, and presented for national acceptance in a mutilated form. But that is the common fate of reformers and enthusiasts born before their time. They sow the seed; others reap the harvest. Patriots, moreover, are not troubled by such considerations. Their trouble is that these tardy conversions are at best half-hearted, and in this case that Government's measures of national defence are tentative and inconclusive. The reformers, and the greater part of the nation, recognising the splendid fighting stuff of which the volunteers are made, ask why this raw material was not rendered available immediately the serious and exacting nature of the task before us in South Africa became apparent. The volunteers enlist under conditions, one of which is that in times of national emergency they should be called out and drilled. Everything shows that a crisis such as that contemplated as possible in drafting the Volunteers' Enlistment Regulations has arisen. It is at last proposed to give the volunteers a real weapon instead of an antiquated toy; to provide them with accessible open spaces for musketry practice and manœuvring; and to give both volunteer and militia officers facilities to attend schools of military instruction; but these reforms were advocated years ago by Mr. Wilkinson and others. The mischief is that in this, as in the belated decision to provide the army with field guns, etc., the ends it is desired

to achieve cannot be achieved in a day, a month, or, so far as many of them are concerned, in a year. It is now proposed to give the volunteers a month's drill and manœuvring, but the majority of the rank and file among these citizen-soldiers are, to quote Mr. Wilkinson, essentially men who work for their daily bread and receive their military training in their spare time. "If a volunteer's engagements interfere with his business he gives them up, being entitled to retire at fourteen days' notice. But in case the volunteer is called out his freedom is gone. He becomes a soldier; he must march or be a deserter; and he becomes entitled to a soldier's pay, and all allowances for his family which a soldier can claim." The objection to calling out the volunteers, that barracks are not available is absurd, because the volunteers could be billeted. The existing emergency demands this step at the very least, so that we may have an effective field army.

It is true that at the moment to exact conscription might be inopportune as partaking of the nature of a measure of panic, and as chilling the spontaneous patriotism of the people; moreover to make what forces we have as quickly available as possible is essential as Mr. Spenser Wilkinson is never tired of proclaiming, for it is little use in an emergency to increase indefinitely the numbers of a raw army. The Government proposal, approved and recommended by Her Majesty, to tempt the time-expired soldiers back to the colours is in the right direction; men between 30 and 45 fully trained, many of whom

have clamoured to be allowed to re-enlist since the outbreak of the war. Why in any case commanders, mostly sexagenarians, should be considered efficient and so indeed prove themselves, while men in the prime of life should be rejected as privates, passes comprehension. Especially is this hard to understand when our immediate enemies are men (and boys) ranging in age from 16 to upwards of 80.

Another excellent proposal to offer commissions to colonists, militia and volunteer officers, and officers of the reserves has been advanced for official acceptance for many years. But it seems to have been forgotten that the Home Militia Act of 1803, an act which is still on the statute book, established the right of the Secretary of State to exact military service of all or any citizen for purposes of domestic defence, and that the citizens should be selected by ballot. It is difficult to understand why the act has not been put into execution. During the debate on the official proposals to strengthen the army, Lord Rosebery asked that timely measures of national defence should be taken. That is what the far-sighted have been asking throughout the last two decades, and what the man-in-the-street at the end of the century has now been moved to demand. Lord Rosebery pertinently said that in the great Civil War in America (1860–66), Lincoln only asked for 75,000 men in the first instance. A few months later it was found that 650,000 men were required, and at the conclusion of the war the Northern States had 2,750,000 soldiers in the field. Had the

United States Government been prepared at the beginning no doubt, as Lord Rosebery says, half-a-million men would have sufficed to quell the Southern rebellion. Sir Charles Dilke in his *British Army* some years ago says that English folk have "a good healthy confidence in their own resources, and in their power to meet evils when they come, but over-confidence when it leads to carelessness is nothing more nor less than folly." This exactly describes our national attitude.

It is not only this over confidence which is to blame however, for our unpreparedness. In 1887 a foreign critic said of our army that it was "an army to which peace was a necessity," and it is certain, as Sir Charles Dilke has recently said, that all modern governments in dealing with the army have gone on the assumption that peace would be preserved except so far as warlike operations against savages and semi-civilised peoples were concerned. Jomini, the great military writer, began to write in 1804 and only laid down his pen when death claimed him in 1869. He declared that the effect of savage warfare was, on the whole, to incapacitate commanders engaged in it from meeting civilised foes. This has been proved conclusively during the present war; and the fact, well established before, must have been well known at the War Office. Everything therefore goes to show that recent British Governments have acted on the assumption that in any case the English people would not again allow their rulers to cross swords with a formidable

military power, and that the military power of the Boer republics was gravely underestimated by the present Government. Hence, although our army costs, with the Indian army, more than the army and navy together of Russia, or Germany, or France, it now transpires that all along it has been quite unprepared to meet the armies of any of these powers on the field.

This lamentable and humiliating state of affairs throws a flood of light on the inconvenience of delegating power to the democracy. It is a state of affairs which would be ludicrous were it not so serious. Lord Rosebery knows that had he been in power he could not have gone further; he could not indeed have gone so far as Lord Salisbury, because the people were not educated up to demanding, tolerating I should say, an effective system of national defence. Lord Rosebery's indignation at the defaults and dilatoriness of the Government is really indignation at a system. In fact the whole of this discussion has worn an air of unreality, since it was in the nature of a sham-fight, having for its object the educating of the people to the hard dry facts of their situation, facts known only too well to the leaders on both sides of the House long ago; though they have been unable to act up to them because, under our precious system of party government, when the real issues dividing the people are minor local ones, the leaders are perforce led by the people, and have to wait for their mandate before they can act. Both sides of the House

are now really engaged in sounding the people to see how far they will go in the direction of personal risk, personal sacrifice of time or money, in the cause of national defence. A certain section of the people has already sprung to arms, but as Lord Salisbury says we stand alone in the world in rejecting compulsory service. Our upper classes provide the whole of the army, navy, and militia officers, and from the working classes the rank and file of the service come. The middle classes do little more than find about half the volunteers. Now the middle classes still have the casting vote at the polling booths. We know already that the upper and lower classes will face death for their country; but if the middle classes selfishly decide against conscription then the knell of the Empire is sounded.

At the time of Napoleon's threatened invasion in 1802, we are said to have had, in addition to our regular army of some 200,000 men, an organised, armed and trained force of a million citizen soldiers. Then England thoroughly recognised her imminent danger. To day, despite the fact that the country is denuded of the pick of its army, reserve army, and militia, and that from the regular army remaining of 109,000 men, some have to be withdrawn to Africa and what remain will be largely inefficients—youths and invalids—and that 10,000 men have been taken from our none-too-strong Indian garrison; despite the fact that the Continent continues to exhibit intense malignity toward the British Empire, and that

Russia openly menaces India, a large section of the people is still too unimaginative, too foolishly optimistic to see that we are face to face with issues of "life and death." To rely exclusively on the navy is a mistake; for as Mr. Clifton Tainton says, writing in the *African Review*, the rate at which foreign countries are increasing their navies bids fair to make the formula governing the maintenance of our naval supremacy one no longer of living value. "A nation of Titans could not stand the strain, combined as it will be, with a cutting of trading profits to the fraction of a dime." The navy, says this authority, must be relieved from the first of its present duties; the protection of the British Isles and colonies from invasion, the protection of British commerce and food supplies being all that should be looked for from it in the future. This, he says, can be done by teaching the male-population to shoot, the necessary teaching could be provided for the necessary moiety of the manhood of the country, at a cost of two millions a year. Mr. Tainton's idea is revolutionary; but it is certain we must in some measure at all events, throw the work of defence upon "a far cheaper defensive agent" than the navy,—the rifle.

The critics of our army system, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Arnold Forster and others have been asserting for years many things which during the last few months have been proved up to the hilt. That our military system is fossilised, and that our Intelligence Department is starved; that the army is deficient

in artillery, both as to numbers and quality; that all services are starved of horses; that the War Office, presided over by a civilian, is in the habit of acting without the authority or even without consultation with the Commander-in-chief; and in brief, to quote Sir Charles Dilke, that the War Office has persisted in involving the army in Peace Routine, and has never prepared it, or forced statesmen to face its preparation as a machine intended for war and that the education of our officers—and despite the much belauded Staff-College is far too non-military and non-technical in its character, and so forth. These reformers are now justified in pointing to lamentable occurrences which go to prove the truth of their statements; for it has been nothing less than the lion pluck of officers and men in the early months of this African war, supplemented by military genius and by knowledge gained in the field in the later months thereof, that have saved us from disaster.

As to what will be the ultimate outcome of this discussion on national defence in Parliament, the press and throughout the Empire, it is of course foolish to attempt a forecast. For my part I have every confidence that it will lead the way to a real system of national defence; and I use the word national in its larger sense as embracing the whole Empire—British Isles and colonies. Obviously the colonies would claim to have a voice in any changes which propose to include them. . . "Adaptability is an essential feature if the colonies are to join, for, being untrammelled by conventions, any attempt to

tie down the colonial contributions to such a hard-and-fast military system as has failed in South Africa, would only lead to faction and failure." Colonists have proved themselves such splendid fighting material in the Boer war; their courage, resource, mobility and elasticity being beyond praise; it would be madness not to encourage them to join themselves permanently to a system of defence which should embrace the whole Empire.

Coming to the immediate reasons which have contributed to our disasters and disappointments in South Africa, they may be summed up in a few words: Procrastination, unpreparedness, underrating the strength of the enemy, over-confidence; to the lack of mobility occasioned by the mass of impedimenta our army carries about with it; the lack of ordnance maps and local knowledge; and the paucity of a most necessary arm in South African warfare—mounted infantry. Our tactics were old-fashioned, and our strategy until Lord Roberts arrived on the scene, not of the best apparently. But into that, not being a military man or a military expert, it would ill-become me to go. 'As to tactics, he who runs may read; and although the conditions of warfare in South Africa are exceptional by reason of the physical peculiarities of the country with its kopjes and boulders and torrential rivers, the tactics followed in many of our battles in this campaign would have failed us anywhere. These mistakes might have been avoided had we put more

reliance in the local volunteers at first, and had we accepted earlier, and allowed them a free hand, the light cavalry the colonies offered us.

It was in 1893 Lord Wolseley wrote: "When shall we succeed in thinking out for ourselves what changes are required in our military system, in our drill, tactics and equipment, untrammelled by notions and prejudices which, sound and good a century ago, are now as out of date and behind the science and inventions of the day as would be the bow and arrows of the Middle Ages? We have now plenty of most intelligent and highly-educated officers capable of modernising an army, but they are sat upon by the bow-and-arrow style of generals. Their initiative is too often crushed by our ignorant and intolerant military conservatism." This conservatism has suffered a severe and we may hope fatal blow from the South African war; and undoubtedly the colonies, through the splendid fighting men they have sent to us, have been the chief instruments in inflicting that blow.

But as to the causes of our discomfiture in South Africa, I cannot do better than let a typical South African, Mr. Clifton Tainton, speak. Mr. Tainton knows every part of South Africa and has been in the thick of its political growth for the best part of a generation. He is an imperialist and a descendant of one of the settlers of 1820—those five thousand picked colonists of whose achievements I have already spoken. His conclusions are of especial value by reason of his peculiar advantages; and I give

them for this reason, and because I have arrived at very similar opinions.

Mr. Tainton gives excellent reasons for supposing that the Federal army numbered no more than 40,000 men at the commencement of the war, swollen to 50,000 by the accession of Cape rebels and fresh auxiliaries from Europe filtering in through Delagoa Bay. I think these figures are below the truth; but that is a small matter. He contends that the Boers are not ordinarily a brave people; that they are defective in discipline, and that in the last Boer war our little garrisons held out against enormously superior numbers which, had the positions been reversed, would have fallen to our troops almost immediately, as Mafeking, Ladysmith and Kimberley would in this war had the Dutch been besieged and the British besiegers. Mr. Tainton ascribes the successes of the Boers in a small degree to the superiority of their arms, guns, machine guns and rifles, and to the fact that their army being composed of mounted infantry, its mobility was greatly superior to ours: in a greater degree to the fact that as marksmen and rough riders they are the superiors of our men; excluding of course the colonial contingent and the imperial yeomanry, and that being the first in the field they have been able to choose country particularly suited for their style of warfare as battle-fields. But he ascribes their successes more than all to their superior tactics—their loose, extended formation, and their skill at taking cover while step by step they creep upon

their foe. The individual man has a chance of making the best use of himself, since he trusts to his own resources and to his own rifle, picking out his target and going for it. The British army has been taught to regard precision in volley firing—and strangely enough, Lord Roberts, radical as he has always been in matters of orthodox drill and tactics, is, or was rather, as unsound upon this as the army generally—as the alpha and omega in musketry practice; whereas in all future warfare—this campaign is not peculiar in that regard—the individual practice of the individual soldier will decide the issue. Our adherence to these obsolete ideas has resulted in our presenting to the enemy so many targets, for "the squares, columns and massive formations of our forefathers" do actually offer so many targets to modern weapons, while there is not a shadow of doubt that the helmet offers another distinctive mark to the enemy, or that the practice of differentiating the dress of the officers from the men's has resulted in the abnormally high proportion of officers placed *hors de combat*, and is incidentally a convincing proof of the keen sight and marksmanship of the Boers.

It is indeed, as Mr. Tainton says, largely a question of sight in modern warfare, seeing that the contending forces are separated by such huge intervening spaces. The present war has proved that such of the townsmen as passed the doctors and got into the army have lost nothing of the pluck of their ancestors; but it is notorious that dwellers in cities in-

variably become short-sighted, owing to the sky-line being cut off everywhere by buildings. The splendid sight of the Boer is of course trained; but the vast majority of the Boers grow up on huge 6,000-acre farms, their homesteads placed on the highest elevation, and commanding a wide range of vision.

These are advantages few up-growing Britons, born in the metropolis of the Empire, enjoy; and the number of those still enjoying them is, as I have shown, rapidly diminishing. The greater reason to endeavour by all the means in our power to make good the deficiency by giving all children in our schools such measure of military drill as may be found feasible. Lord Meath has urged the necessity of this precaution for years, and as matter of fact the "Boys' Brigade" and the "Church Lads' Brigade" already exist, and are excellent object-lessons in what may be done. At some of our public schools, at Harrow in any case, boys reaching the age of sixteen years are compelled to join the volunteers. The British Government has promised to bring the matter before the managers of public schools; and the minister for Scotland, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, has urged the measure upon the school boards and managers of schools in Scotland.

In summing up the gains to the Empire likely to accrue from the war we must place first and foremost the creation of a body of 220,000 seasoned soldiers, men having a full and varied experience of modern warfare. We shall thus be placed at a great advantage should we be compelled to take the

field in Europe; since no country can boast of so large a force of young soldiers having experience of war. Then, again, the war has welded the Empire together. Writing in 1880, Sir John Colomb said: "Home is something more than an abstract idea having reference only to locality; its foundations are laid in common interests, sympathy, and affection. A 'silver streak of sea' cannot divide those interests, nor can miles of ocean sever the strong ties of affection and of sympathy. Hence it is that, from whatever quarter of the Empire a cry for help comes—wherever the British flag waves over Englishmen struggling on their own ground for all they hold dear—it is their own home is in danger, there is the rallying-point of forces created for its defence. While we boast of armed hosts here and in the colonies, whose proud motto is 'home defence,' they must 'survey the Empire' to 'behold our home.'" As Sir John says, in a letter I have before me, this expression of imperial faith was regarded in 1880 "as a wild dream," but it is now fulfilled to the letter in South Africa; an incalculable gain. Moreover, as I have already said, I believe the upshot of all this will be the creation of a co-ordinate system of national, that is to say of imperial defence, though I am not insensible to the risk, a horrid eventuality, I dismiss from my mind as the craven fear of "rotten pessimism," that when we are out of the wood in South Africa, our old habit will re-assert itself of settling down in blissful forgetfulness of all our past alarms and the warnings

of dear experience, and that we shall allow our national security to take care of itself once more.

I hope, however, I am not too sanguine in dismissing this fear! Of course the war has resulted in the loss of much military prestige; though, as Lord Rosebery has implied, that prestige was scarcely anything more than self-entertained, since the inadequacy of our military forces was better known by Continental rulers than by our own Government; English governments and the English people being accustomed to brush aside awkward doubts and fears by appealing to that innate fatalism of the British nature, where the security of the nation is concerned, that all will come right in the chapter of accidents. Still confidence based on ignorance of our insecurity is worse than useless, and much has been gained by the knowledge we now possess of the weak places in our national armour.

For the rest, whatever the war may cost us in money it will be well spent, provided, of course, our ultimate success is assured. The *Matin* has recently shown that, while France has added to her debt by £212,000,000 since 1879, England has reduced hers by £96,000,000. So that, as this French paper says, we are only spending, as we can well afford to do, our savings.

CHAPTER XV.

DEFENCE: NAVAL AND COLONIAL.

IN the preceding chapter I have not dealt with the vast changes which have taken place in the *matériel* of the army because, roughly speaking, the development of military science has been confined to no European nation, progress has been simultaneous, and that progress is dealt with in a separate volume of this series. For a like reason I shall not attempt to do more than sketch in outline the history of that marvellous growth which during the century has completely metamorphosed the fleet, changing it so as to be quite unrecognisable as the descendant of the navy which won Trafalgar; so much so that the naval heroes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries would fail to discover in our existing fleet, the arm of defence they employed with such magnificent results in their day and generation.

In 1800 the Royal Navy consisted of 767 ships, with a total tonnage of 668,744 tons, manned by 135,000 men and costing £12,422,837 for its yearly maintenance. In 1808 the number of ships had risen to 869, tonnage to 892,800 tons, the *personnel* to 143,800 men, and the annual outlay to £17,-496,047. In 1814 the figures were respectively 901

ships, 966,000 tons, 146,000 men and the estimates amounted to £18,786,509. In 1850 the proportion of sailing to steam vessels was 339 to 161. In 1859 the navy consisted of 573 vessels, of which 271 were sailing and 258 steam vessels. It also had 155 gunboats, and 111 vessels in harbour service.

It was in 1859 that the French began to build iron-clads. M. Dupuy de Lôme constructed the plated frigate *Gloire*, which was launched in 1860. In the next year the *Solferino* and *Magenta* left the stocks. Great Britain immediately followed suit, building the *Warrior*, which took the sea on the 29th December, 1860. Although the *Warrior* was already out of date in 1864, it and its immediate successors sealed the fate of the old wooden walls in which Howe, Camperdown, St. Vincent, Nelson and a score or more naval heroes almost as distinguished, won famous victories over the Dutch, French and Spanish fleets.

As I have said, it does not fall within my province to trace the development of naval architecture, or to deal with the rapid and radical changes in the construction of our battle-ships which the last half-century has seen. Although the substitution of iron-clads for wooden vessels has led to a vast increase in the navy's power, and to a proportionate increase in the cost of maintaining it, it has also led to a decrease in the number of vessels afloat; a result not to be wondered at when it is remembered that each vessel now costs three quarters of a million and upwards, ten times the cost of the old four-deckers.

In 1837 the navy estimates amounted to about 4½ millions; in 1886–87 they had risen to £12,741,000; in 1896 to 19 millions, in 1898–99 to £23,778,000, in 1899–1900 to £26,594,500. The vote for 1898–99 was exclusive of a supplementary estimate of 8 millions, necessitated by the naval programmes of foreign states, especially those of Russia and France. There can be little doubt that in years to come Great Britain will be compelled to go on increasing her naval expenditure, while the special expenditure which has become a periodic feature of the last quarter of a century, will probably have to be continued, though, should we elect to pay greater heed to our coast defences, and to training a sufficient and always available body of sharp-shooters, something might be done to provide for national defence irrespective of the navy, thereby lightening the burthen it imposes on the country. I referred to this alternative in the previous chapter. Meanwhile the healthy condition of public opinion as to the absolute necessity of keeping our navy well ahead, at least, of the combined navies of France and Russia, obliges the government from time to time to concede to the popular outcry for more ships. The number of first-class navies increases with every decade. Mr. T. A. Brassey now includes Japan's fleet in that category, and the United States has made enormous strides as a naval power since Spain was conquered. Italy, owing to financial considerations, has suffered a temporary check as a sea power; and it is significant that, for a like reason, France is

not carrying into effect in its entirety the ambitious naval programme she recently formulated. It is also significant that every movement toward naval efficiency which France makes, is made avowedly with a view to a future conflict with England. As to Russia, she, in company with other nations, Germany notably, shows feverish anxiety to increase her naval strength. It has been recently pointed out that, as touching Russia, it is impossible to say what her real sea power may be, since the Black Sea, where many of her ships are built, is practically a sealed sea plot outside of the Russian Empire.

The most noteworthy development of this continental zeal in the direction of naval power has occurred during the present year in Germany. Much that has been written and spoken by German journalists and publicists on the Kaiser's ambitious naval programme, may be regarded as so much playing to the gallery, for it is doubtless gall and wormwood to the ordinary German that his country is not ready to contest with us the possession of South Africa. So much is avowed with brutal frankness. If Germany really cherishes ambitions or by and bye wresting colonies from Great Britain, which contain vast numbers of Englishmen, she fondly imagines a vain thing; since even supposing success should attend such an enterprise, Germany would very soon have reason to regret that she had ever attempted to impose foreign domination and her bureaucratic system of government on free-born Britons.

But that by the way. It remains to be recorded that Germany is now definitively committed to doubling her navy during the years 1900–1916, thereby increasing her war ships to 38. Notwithstanding all that has been said, I think the British Empire may reasonably hope that these ships will never be ranged against her; still it is more than probable that in the future the British navy will be brought up to the strength necessary to enable it to cope with a three-power hostile combination.

A cursory glance at the navy estimates of the century is an instructive commentary on the fluctuations of popular sentiment as to what constitutes effective defence of our coasts, the colonies and the commerce of the Empire; but I think the sermon preached by a score or so of naval reformers, of whom Sir John Colomb may be regarded as the protagonist, for he has been working to awaken the Government and the country to the dangers confronting the nation for thirty-two years, have at last borne fruit. The nation is not likely to forget that the cost of our navy is merely to be regarded as a premium upon our trade, which as we have seen in preceding chapters has increased enormously since the Queen took up the sceptre of these realms in 1837. Obviously the general application of steam to nautical locomotion has obliged Englishmen to revive their confident assurance that insularity meant for them security; nor are the speculations of M. de Bloch, who stakes his high reputation on the assertion that in modern warfare, the attacking force

needs to outnumber by ten to one the defenders, likely to reassure the inhabitants of Great or Greater Britain. Before the Crimean war, in 1850 that is to say, £6,640,596 was all the nation cared to spend upon the navy. That war led to a vast increase in naval expenditure; the figures were approximately 14½ millions in 1855 and not far short of 20 millions in 1856. By 1859 they have fallen away to £9,215,487, but the naval programme of France, and the almost avowed menace to England, brought the estimates up to £13,331,668 in 1861. In the later sixties and in the seventies they dwindled away again, averaging about 10 millions yearly during these decades.

It is not necessary to detail the various measures adopted by patriotic and far-seeing Englishmen to arouse their countrymen, and through them successive governments, to bring our fleet up to such a condition of strength and efficiency as would suffice to render the national mind so far confident as it is humanly possible to be, that the British Empire was secure against attack. In these recurring campaigns, the *Pall Mall Gazette* and the *Morning Post* have honourably distinguished themselves, and more recently the Navy League—the organisation which conceived and carried out that adroit device for stimulating national enthusiasm, the annual celebration at Trafalgar Square of Nelson's memorable victory of 1805—has accomplished a magnificent work in this connection. Of course when each of our battle-ships is, roughly speaking, the equivalent

of a million pounds sterling, and when naval warfare depends so much more upon our keeping ahead of the times in the strength and effectiveness of moving batteries, and the scientific equipment of commanders, than upon the actual man-to-man fighting qualities of our seamen, the fact that the number of our ships is less than it was at the beginning of the century has no relative significance. In 1850 we had 585 ships carrying 17,200 guns; in 1896, 300 ships furnished with 2910 guns. In the spring of 1898 we had 52 battle-ships built and 12 building; 113 cruisers and 22 building; 15 vessels for coast defence, 35 torpedo vessels, 50 torpedo boat destroyers and 45 building; and 98 torpedo boats. From the latest return issued early in 1900, I find that Great Britain has 53 battle-ships and 17 building, 17 armoured cruisers and 14 building; 107 protected cruisers and 9 building; 15 unprotected cruisers; 13 armoured coast defence vessels; 35 torpedo vessels; 75 torpedo boat destroyers, and 33 building; and 95 first-class torpedo boats, and 2 building.

Against these figures it is of course necessary to put those which set forth the navies of other nations. France has 31 battle-ships and 4 building; 8 armoured cruisers and 12 building; 36 protected cruisers and 4 building; 14 unprotected cruisers; 14 armoured coast defence vessels; 15 torpedo vessels; 2 torpedo boat destroyers, 10 building; 219 torpedo boats and 47 building, and 3 submarine boats and 9 building. Russia has 12 battle-ships and 12 building; 10 armoured cruisers and 2 build-

ing; 3 protected cruisers and 8 building; 3 unprotected cruisers; 15 coast defence vessels and 1 building; 17 torpedo vessels and 35 building; 7 torpedo boat destroyers and 6 building; and 174 torpedo boats. To give the grand totals of all kinds of craft, they run as follows: Great Britain 413 vessels built, 75 building; France 343 built, 86 building; Russia 240 built, 66 building; Germany 185 built and 23 building; Italy 206 built, 21 building; the United States 64 built, 58 building; Japan 71 built, 43 building.

I do not know how these figures strike the public generally; but I confess they are not reassuring to me. We do not seem to be nearly so far ahead of our rivals and possible enemies as we should be. It will be seen that both France and Russia are a great deal stronger than we in torpedo boats; though we are stronger in torpedo boat destroyers. As to the navy of the United States, though weak in battleships, it has shown that preparedness for action and efficiency of the *personnel* will enable a small fleet to crumble up a much larger one devoid of these advantages. Italy's fleet would also be an important factor in any general European war; and obviously Germany, which is always thorough, would be able, at a pinch, to turn the scales in favour of the side she might espouse were the other combatants at all equally matched. In any naval war in which Great Britain was concerned, Japan would obviously be able to render effective aid either to us or to our enemies. I repeat that, taking a survey of the fleets

of the world, and the number of obligations imposed upon our fleet, the position of our Empire is not one which a patriot can view with equanimity. It must be remembered, too, that in a great naval war, even in a greater degree than in a great military war, financial elasticity, that is to say, the staying power of nations in the matter of expenditure, would not count to-day as it counted at the beginning of the century; because, whereas all sorts and conditions of vessels could be made available for warfare then, nowadays the nation which possessed the last effective iron-clad afloat would be able to place all unarmoured craft *hors de combat*, thereby dominating the situation. It was pointed out by Sir John Colomb years ago, that it takes as many years to build warships and to make modern guns as in Nelson's days it took months; while the use of the implements of later-day naval warfare requires long training; the knowledge is not to be picked in a hurry. Everywhere except in Africa and India, we have sea frontiers to protect, while the aggregate sea trade of our colonies and dependencies alone exceeds by many millions the total sea trade of France and Russia taken together. The solution, as Sir John Colomb has said, of how to protect this trade, and the sources from which it comes, lies ultimately in the increase of the population of those colonies, and the cultivation of our lands over-sea.

Meanwhile the British people in the metropolis of the Empire, depending as they do for seventy-five per cent.—I apprehend, taking an average, the

statement is approximately accurate—of their food supply upon foreign and colonial produce, are more vulnerable than those self-contained nations which feed themselves; and statesmen responsible for the safety of the Empire have to take into serious consideration what would be the attitude of the people of these islands, of all classes, but especially of the working classes, should the stoppage of those supplies lead to anything like a condition of famine. Whatever the people might or might not have done in the early part of the century, when they suffered untold tortures from want and privation during the great war of 1793–1815, they were then powerless to make their voices effectively heard. Rebellions and riots there were in plenty; but they were more or less easily quelled. To-day the case is very different. The democracy rules, and if the democracy said to the Government, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther," the Government would be forced to submit. At the commencement of the Transvaal revolt, a Boer, or pseudo-Boer, sent two letters to the *Times* and *Morning Post* which excited universal attention. Mixed up with a great deal of bombastic rhodomontade, there was much in those letters to give patriotic Englishmen pause. The writer, whoever he was, put his finger on a number of sore places in the body politic, and in the domestic life of the country. Our upper classes, and especially our military officers, were, he said, incapacitated for prolonged exertion by reason of the pampered, self-indulgent lives they had led. Our

soldiers were recruited from the dregs of the community, and so forth. All this of course was grossly inaccurate. Our upper classes are not nearly so self-indulgent as at the beginning of the century; while our soldiers are of infinitely superior quality to those who fought under Wellington in the Peninsular War. When, however, this audacious critic said that the people would never submit to pay so high a price for continuous war, as should include the necessity of being put on the shortest of short rations, and of having to pay enormously for these, he made a statement which he had no means of proving, but which had just enough plausibility about it to cause feelings of uneasiness to patriotic Englishmen. It is impossible to say what the democracy would do in such a case. Certainly the spirit in which they are taking the more than considerable war we are waging at this moment, proves that education has enabled them to understand and support a just and necessary war. But in this case they have not been asked to make a money payment toward the expenses of the conflict. The Republics are capable of contributing to the cost and doubtless will be called upon to do so, in some measure in any case; while such of the cost as falls upon the United Kingdom will be borne by the upper and middle classes. The growth of the imperial sentiment, and with it the appreciation on the part of the people of the absolute commercial importance to them and to their children of upholding the Empire, might, and probably would, do much to reconcile

Englishmen of all classes to enormous sacrifices in the causes of that Empire. As to what would constitute a breaking point it is impossible to say.

Well-meaning but unpractical persons have come forward from time to time, with all manner of schemes under which the United Kingdom might make itself superior to the loss of its foreign and colonial supplies. Among these schemes, the storage of corn and other staples is constantly advanced. But when the evil day arrives, we shall have to depend upon the skill or daring of thousands of amateur victuallers, who will do their utmost, if only for their own sakes, the greed of gain, to smuggle food into the country. Should, however, the worst that we can conceive happen, should our ports be blockaded, and the supply of food from Europe, Asia and America be cut off—a possible though remote contingency—then will arise a situation which will put the patriotism of the nation to as severe a test as it is possible to imagine. Of course if the case were hopeless, if the blockade were complete, and our navy absolutely worsted, and no chance of retrieving our fortunes remained, then—well then it would be Then. But in any less case, any case which, though imposing immense suffering and colossal effort, admitted of our extricating ourselves from the toils of the enemy, then I believe that the nation would rise to the occasion; and practically to a man refuse to purchase immunity from immediate suffering at the cost of permanent degradation.

I have dwelt upon these contingencies of the future because, although I hope every year is making them more and more remote, since every year we move nearer to that consolidation of imperial force for imperial defence, which will render us invulnerable, they have been, during the century, often and often, something more than contingencies —they have been very real and imminent dangers. I may add, without irreverence, that it would seem as if a special Providence had protected us from successful invasion in those early years of the Victorian Era, when France having recovered from Waterloo, we still lived in a fool's paradise, blindly believing in the permanence of peace. Our army and navy were at the lowest possible ebb. Of course the danger was more definite and absolute during the few years succeeding the Crimean War, which had revealed to France the feebleness of our military establishment.

I mention these contingencies for another reason. For many years past, a few far-seeing enthusiasts have laboured unceasingly to bring home to the people of the Empire the importance of preparing that Empire as a distinct unit, against attack from any foreign combination. For thirty-two years Captain Sir John Colomb has lifted up his voice, and, enforcing his lesson by unanswerable arguments based on the fulness of his knowledge, has begged his fellow countrymen the Empire over, to stand shoulder to shoulder, and by united action and common help to make themselves invulnerable against attack. Sir

John Colomb has of course had many fellow-workers in the splendid campaign he has waged against the slothfulness and *laisser-faire* of the people and the governments of the various parts of the Empire: the names of Sir Charles Nugent, Lord Brassey, Mr. T. A. Brassey, Mr. Arnold Forster, Admiral Colomb, General Sir Bevan Edwards, Mr. Spenser Wilkinson, Mr. H. W. Wilson and Mr. Arnold White, leap to the mind. And as concerning the whole question, naval and military defence, the name of the Duke of Cambridge must be included. I have heard the Duke over and over again, speak in words of solemn warning of the dangers of relying upon our army and navy as absolute guarantees against invasion. His Royal Highness has always insisted that it was a question of being prepared to pay, either in one's proper person, or in money, to obtain that security for the Empire so necessary to its healthy life. "If you live in security," he has said, "you can do anything you like—whether it be in commerce or trade or manufacture." But as I have said, Sir John Colomb will go down to posterity as the protagonist of this movement. I have in mind a memorable address read by Sir John Colomb before the Royal United Service Institution, to an audience which included the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge. It was then that the Duke gave utterance to the words quoted above. This was in the great Colonial year, 1886, and this paper, while it epitomised all that Sir John had previously written and said on the study of his lifetime—Imperial

Federation for naval and military defence—sounded a note which has since echoed through the length and breadth of the land, the Empire, that is to say; and will go on sounding until Great Britain and her daughter nations have provided themselves with a system of common defence which shall render them unassailable.

Sir John Colomb contended, and he is still contending, that "all territories, all industries, all manufactures, all interests and all peoples under our one flag make up a union of common war risks against which general insurance must be paid, and joint precautions taken," and that they can only be met with success by coöperation and joint action between the several parts of the Empire upon a settled system and a developed plan. He points out that an outlying empire, with its many hundred millions' worth of goods on the sea during any year, is most directly concerned in the locking up of hostile fleets on the outbreak of war. He asks us to remember that the trade of British North America and South Africa together, was (1886) about equal to the total trade of England when St. Vincent was fought; and that the sea commerce of Australasia alone exceeds by tens of millions the sea trade of the United Kingdom when Nelson triumphed at Trafalgar. The freedom of a nation's fleet depends primarily upon the number and general distribution of ports available for coaling, docking and refitting. It is therefore of the utmost moment that all British ports of importance, at

home and abroad, should be secure from attack. The Empire's ability to do this rapidly is a question of coöperation between its several parts, involving joint expenditure and common naval and military reserves of force and of supplies. "Development," says Sir John Colomb, "of the infinite food-producing capabilities of our Empire beyond the sea, really corresponds to an increase of our defensive power. It may for the foregoing reasons be considered as part and parcel of the question how to secure a maximum of safety with a minimum of naval expenditure. Its solution lies in the increase of population in our own colonies, and the cultivation of our own lands over sea. Coöperation between the Mother Country and the colonies to produce this result, would be of infinite advantage to both."

Sir John Colomb very properly reminds us that to hoist the Union Jack on islands or mainlands will not suffice us, if we are not in a position to pull down hostile flags when the day of trouble comes, and that this end is to be gained only by coöperation, by arrangements made beforehand between the governments of the kingdom and the over-sea colonies in conjunction with the military and naval authorities. He reminds us that while most of the ports of Australasia are secured against sea attack by local means, some of our great commercial ports at home are not; and he asks whether any one is simple enough to think that a defensive system adapted to the ancient necessities of our island can be effective when that island has grown

into an empire and overspread the world, with a sea trade which represents about one-third of the whole world's interchange by land and sea, and helpless ships, carrying about 70 to 80 per cent. of the world's trade, to protect in time of war. To provide, then, for the effective defence of all this trade and shipping, and for the coasts—and the coasts, of course, include the hinterlands of our various colonies and dependencies—is a duty the four hundred or so millions inhabiting the Empire owe to themselves; a duty which those persons who are able to see farthest ahead, and especially those persons who, seeing, are in a position to take the initiative, owe to the Empire.

Sir John Colomb remarks that since the great International Exhibition of 1851, which was expected to inaugurate an era of universal peace, there have been numerous wars, great and small; and he asks whether in these days, when rifle and cricket matches are arranged between England and Australia and England and Canada, the gifts of science are only to be applied for the purposes of the cricket field and rifle range, and to be neglected and unused for want of such an Imperial system as can combine British power for British protection in war.

I have paraphrased so far as I am able in so small a space, the salient features of Sir John Colomb's propaganda, because it is proper to give honour where honour is due; and although I have not done this doughty champion of the imperial cause

full justice in condensing his arguments and positions, still I have done him this much of justice in giving his programme of work and reforms as the *fons et origo* of all the other pronouncements on this subject with which we are now happily flooded. The more workers the better; and assuredly the campaign has now enlisted many earnest workers; nor has their work proved barren of results.

Some thirteen years ago Sir Graham Berry, at that time Agent-General for Victoria, speaking on the colonies in relation to the Empire, remarked that at no remote period little or nothing was expected from the colonies in the way of local or imperial defence. Theoretically England undertook to defend them against all attacks; local payment for the use of imperial troops whilst stationed in the colonies, and a few isolated and altogether insufficient attempts at harbour armaments, constituting the sole colonial contributions to the defence of their own land. Sir William Jervois's visit to the Australasian colonies, to inspect and report upon the defensive works necessary to place their harbours, capitals and chief seacoast towns in a reasonable condition of safety, has led to the adoption of his recommendations by the respective governments. A respectable fleet had even before this visit, been acquired by Victoria for the protection of the fortifications, and for the defence of Melbourne. Victoria had spent large sums on defensive works, amounting to £1,110,000 for the ten years between 1874 and 1884, while in 1886 it was spending £250,-

000 annually on defence, which, on the basis of population, was equal to nearly £9,000,000 for the United Kingdom. The other Australasian governments were also busy in the same work, impelled to make the effort by reason of the two dangers ever present to their minds: Attack from a power or powers with which England might at some time or other be at war, and the menace constituted by the occupation of neighbouring islands by European powers.

When the Australian governments agreed to defend their own shores, and to provide a navy for that purpose, they were most solemnly warned by far-sighted persons to look to it that the Imperial Government, in one of its fits of economy, did not make the existence of this fleet an excuse for reducing the naval estimates; a very real danger, but one, happily, which so far has been safely circumvented. Colonel E. T. H. Hutton, in speaking some months since (April 19, 1898) at the Royal Colonial Institute, on a coöperative system for the defence of the Empire, startled his hearers by announcing that the Australian colonies in particular, relying upon an unguarded statement of the Duke of Devonshire, which, by the way, he afterward explained away, but which seemed to imply that the Mother Country made herself responsible for the defence of the whole Empire against attack by sea, had disposed of some of their ships of war and reduced their local naval forces. There was very little justification for this disquieting statement; and signs are not wanting

that this retrogressive policy was merely the result of the swing back of the pendulum, or to change the metaphor, to that cooling down of patriotic ardour and watchfulness with which we are only too familiar in the United Kingdom. The splendid way in which the Australasian colonies have come to the assistance of the Motherland in the suppression of the Africander conspiracy in Her Majesty's South African Empire, shows that they are just as keen to uphold the cause of British imperialism, or in other words, freedom, in a colony remote from their own shores, as they are in the protection of those shores; for in this connection, Sir W. Lyne, Premier of New South Wales, has declared that that colony is in a better state of defence than ever it was, despite the large contingent of volunteers which had gone to South Africa, since the martial ardour of the people has been stimulated, and hundreds of young men are submitting themselves to military drill.

It has been too hastily assumed that the unanimous vote of £30,000 annually by the Cape Parliament for the maintenance of a battle-ship, may be taken as an indication of the loyalty of Cape Colony as a whole. I have repeatedly pointed out elsewhere that such a belier is unhappily quite inadmissible; and could only be entertained by persons imperfectly acquainted with Cape politics. The great majority of the members of the Africander Bond have aspirations toward a United South African Republic; but they are exceedingly anxious to retain the protection of the British fleet, fearing that

their independence might be menaced by one of several possible European powers were British protection withdrawn. This consideration, together with their inbred love of throwing dust in the eyes of Great Britain, explains the Africander Bond vote.

Were space elastic, I should like to examine here some of those ingenious schemes for coöperative imperial defence which have been put forth from time to time. Colonel Hutton's scheme, before mentioned, takes as its guiding principles that mutual defence be guaranteed by one and all parts alike of the Empire; British supremacy at sea being maintained by the Imperial Government, and lastly a bold and pleasing proposition—which in these days of waiting until we are attacked, is most refreshing—Colonel Hutton has the hardihood and patriotism to contend that the true defence of the Empire may be best served by a vigorous offensive—that hostilities should be forced upon the enemies of the British Empire, and the issue fought out upon other than British soil. These are seasonable words just now, when we need to put our foot down in Persia, China and Morocco.

Mr. Arnold Forster, a politician who does not mince his words in condemning the backwardness of the colonies in coming forward to do their fair share of the defence of the Empire, complains that the people of the United Kingdom spend 62 per cent of their national income in providing for imperial defence, whereas Queensland spends one per cent. To suppose, he urges, that Australia is making ade-

quate preparation for war by establishing a camp and pleasant suburban picnic is an absurdity. Of course these views are advanced in too extreme a way, and have been put out of court by recent events. But I confess I have considerable sympathy with them. We have made the colonies a present of the Crown Lands, and granted them representative government; but in return several important groups, as we have already seen, persistently shut out the over-crowded inhabitants of these islands, who are taxed heavily to defend these lands from the clutches of continental grabbers, which in dog-in-the-manger fashion they refuse to open to English settlers. Colonists have, however, a partial reply to criticism of the Arnold Forster brand. They contend that in South Africa and New Zealand, for instance, they have done enough for the Empire in wresting those lands from savages. In Canada, Sir Charles Tupper and General Laurie are never tired of reminding home Englishmen that in building the Canadian Pacific Railway, Canada has indirectly contributed toward the defence of the Empire. It has always seemed to me that this argument is a little too far-fetched, seeing that the bulk of the money for that magnificent enterprise was subscribed by metropolitans, Englishmen living in the British Isles, and that the undertaking has proved to be an exceedingly remunerative one for Canada and Canadians. Apart from these considerations, the contention is a fanciful one. Great Britain might as well excuse herself from

direct contributions to imperial defence on the score that the linking of London and Liverpool by railway, a work of obvious strategical importance, has bought for her a measure of immunity from the pecuniary obligations for imperial defence.

These quibbles are, however, to be deprecated. If they were not constantly discussed, I should not have introduced them. The real reason why the colonies have not as yet made a more direct and substantial contribution toward imperial defence, is a very simple one. The colonies have regarded Great Britain as a rich and powerful parent, quite able and willing to pay for the upkeep of her children. The sons of wealthy parents rarely show eagerness to contribute to their own maintenance, and commonly defer doing so, until they are plainly told that it is expected of them. It does not come into their heads to make the first move in that direction. Why on earth should it? The processes of money-making are not exhilarating, save in the case of those persons who, born without money, find the excitement of winning it an amusement and stimulus which compensates them for the work and turmoil involved. The colonies are like spoiled sons of fortune. They will not accept responsibility spontaneously. But when they come to understand, as they are amply proving they are coming to understand, that the strain of upholding single-handed this enormous Empire, is pressing very heavily on the Parent land, and that the taxpayer in the British Isles is beginning to ask himself

why he should be taxed exclusively to pay for the upkeep of the Empire, while English folk across the seas far more prosperous than himself go scot free, then they will come forward voluntarily, and insist upon taking their fair share of the common pecuniary burthen. What they have done in sending their sons to fight shoulder to shoulder with the imperial troops in South Africa, is an earnest of this.

It must not be supposed, however, that so far as the local military and naval defence of the colonies goes, colonists have been altogether neglectful. The Earl of Northbrook stated in the Lords the other day, that the Militia Law of Queensland, Canada, and other self-governing colonies was based on compulsory service. A few days later Mr. Chamberlain made the following statement in the House of Commons:—"In Canada the Militia roll includes all male inhabitants between 18 and 60 years who are British subjects, and not especially exempted. The Militia might be called out for active service either within or without Canada. In Cape Colony the Burgher force includes all males between 18 and 50, with certain exemptions, and might be called out for service in the colony or beyond the borders. The defence forces of South Australia, Queensland and Tasmania include all British male inhabitants between the ages of 18 and 45 years in South Australia, and 18 and 60 in Queensland, and 18 and 55 years in Tasmania, and they are liable to serve in any part of Australia or Tasmania. The New Zea-

land Militia consists of all male inhabitants between 17 and 55 years, and is liable for service in the colony. Compulsory powers in those colonies are not enforced; only those who volunteered being called out for training." The significance of this statement is to be found in its last sentence. These Militia laws are purely technical and academic; and excellent as they are in establishing the principle of compulsory service, are practically a dead letter. It has been found best in the Australasian colonies to retain a small permanent force to man the fortifications, and keep the armaments therein in a state of efficiency, and to rely on these as a nucleus of the main body of Australian forces which "consists of volunteers," to quote Mr. Coghlan's official handbook, "enrolled under a system of partial payment, which affords an effective defence force without the disadvantages and expense of a standing army." Only in New Zealand is the volunteer system the mainstay of defence; for in most of the provinces "the service of those who are purely volunteers is discouraged."

From the tables prepared by Captain Banbury, R.A., given in an appendix to a paper read by Col. John T. Owen, before the Royal Colonial Institute in 1890, it would seem that the aggregate forces for the three great groups of colonies, the Canadian Dominion, the South Africa colonies and Australasia, amounted in that year to 78,000 officers and men, which if one added the forces of the smaller colonies came up to a total of 83,000 men

of all arms. These forces are thus diyided: For Canada the total is given at 38,238, exclusive of Imperial, staff and other officers; for Australasia 32,-019, cadet corps and rifle clubs omitted; for South Africa 6,710, exclusive of Imperial, staff and other officers.

These figures standing alone, though fairly accurate as regards to-day—I will deal with the alterations in them presently—are somewhat misleading unless examined and defined. Take the case of South Africa. Throughout the present war, many enquiries have been made as to the whereabouts of the Cape Mounted Rifles, a force numbering upwards of 800 men. As a matter of fact, during the last session of the Cape Parliament (1899) the Africander Bond, which is in power, actually had the effrontery to reduce the vote for the force by as many thousands of pounds as to practically render it non-existent. I remember calculating at tho time, that the saving on this count would more than cover the vote, £30,000 per annum, for the navy; or in other words, if my memory serves me, the reduction was for upwards of £40,000. Meanwhile the formation of Rifle Clubs, almost entirely composed of up-country farmers, in other words disloyal and conspiring Dutchmen, was encouraged by the Africander Ministry. Significant enough! I find that in 1896, the last year in which statistics are available to me, the authorised strength of the Volunteer and Cadet Corps of Cape Colony was 6,865 men, while the actual total was 1000 less than that number. Of

course to-day the force is double if not treble the above total; for at last fresh volunteer corps have been and are being enrolled, but it is known that the Cape Premier, Mr. Schreiner, giving as his justification the risk of provoking civil war in the Colony, discouraged, if he did not actually prohibit, the enlistment of volunteers. It is a fact, though, as Mr. Chamberlain stated, and one that must not be lost sight of, that every able-bodied man in the Colony between the ages of 18 and 50 is liable, on an emergency, for military service. Between 1893 and 1895, during the Rhodes Ministry, there had been a steady increase in the volunteer force: the figures being for the Cape Rifles, 479, 656 and 741 respectively, and for the Cape Police 961, 1,169 and 1,262.

It is impossible to say with certainty what the actual volunteer force of the Colony of Natal is at this moment; but it must be far above the figures given in 1897, when the Mounted Police numbered about 260 officers and men, and the Volunteer Corps nearly 2,000 officers and men. Natal has shown the fine stuff British colonists are made of; and at the time of writing it may be confidently asserted that a very high percentage of the manhood of the Colony is in the field, fighting against Joubert and his army.

The latest figures available for the seven colonies of Australasia (1897) give the total at about 28,000, including civilian rifle clubs, and naval volunteer artillery; but not including the Cadet Corps, consisting of youths attending school, who, to quote Mr.

Coghlan, are "taught the use of arms so as to fit them, on reaching manhood, for taking a patriotic share in the defence of their country." In 1898, at a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute, Sir Saul Samuel, for many years Agent-General for New South Wales, stated that he had read in a newspaper that 50,000 men were encamped within a few miles of Sydney for Easter manœuvres. This observation evoked from General Sir Henry Norman the reply that the total force which could be got together in the camp from the whole of Australia would not approach 50,000 men; while he questioned whether there were arms for that number. In any case, whatever the actual force, each Australian colony has supplied a magnificent contingent of finely built and trained men for the army in South Africa; and they have already done splendid service there. Those who saw the New South Wales Lancers, when they visited this country, and we may accept them as a sample of the whole, felt confident that the Australian contingents would give a good account of themselves. And they have given it.

As to Canada, it would seem from the official returns that the sedentary militia, which is stated by Colonel Walker Powell, in his article on "The Militia System of Canada" ("Canada: An Encyclopædia"), to have been with the active militia 694,008 men in 1871, when Fenian invasions were repeatedly threatened, still exists on paper. In any case, all men up to the age of 60 are technically liable to military service. In Great Britain the idea is prevalent that

the Canadian Militia numbers something like three-quarters of a million men. This sedentary militia was formed in 1851. In 1861 the active militia was 11,962 and in 1863, 25,000. In 1869, the regular army, which stood at 13,185 men, was diminished by 3,592 men. In 1889, the active militia numbered 37,474; in 1892, 37,613; in 1894, 38,054. The numbers for 1899-1900 are given as follows: Permanent militia, 986 men; active militia, 36,650 men, and the expense of maintenance at, roughly, 1,700,000 dollars. Canada possesses a very good military college at Kingston, and a number of commissions in the regular army are given to cadets who have passed through that college. It is proposed to increase this number. I believe I am right in saying that the battalions Canada has sent to coöperate with the Imperial troops in South Africa, were not composed mainly of existing militia regiments, but were recruited specially in the Dominion.

With the military forces of the smaller colonies, I need not deal; but I may say that on the whole, considering all the conditions, the fact that our colonies possess something like 80,000 regular troops, or militia, perhaps I should say, is a highly creditable one. That Canada, which in 1776 and again in 1812 made such splendid exertions to preserve its independence and its connection with the British Crown, still thinks more of her land than of her sea defences, still has an eye on the possible attention of too pressing a character on the part of her southern neighbour, is not surprising. Canada has done com-

paratively little toward providing for coast defences, and nothing in the direction of founding a navy. This shows that the most important over-sea province of the Empire still looks to the Mother Country for protection against European aggression. So in the main do all the other colonies, though Australasia is doing her part in her own waters, a stipulation as concerning the employment of her fleet to which she would scarcely adhere could her navy be made more effective against the enemies of the Empire elsewhere; for, as Sir Graham Berry said some years ago, who can estimate the loss involved, not only to Australia but to the whole Empire, in ever so brief a period of disaster, to the Imperial navy? Any amount of money timely expended in preparation, would be insignificant compared with this possible calamity. The action of Australasia in contributing as she does £126,000 yearly for the maintenance of five fast cruisers and two torpedo gunboats in Australasian waters, is therefore much to be applauded.

This brings me back to the point from which I started. I have shown how radical the change has been in the British navy during the last few years of the century. In 1885-6 we expended £12,660,569 upon it. We now spend something like double that amount, exclusive of supplemental estimates, which, as I have said, have come to stay. It is a pity that we should have to sound the alarum periodically in order to get the navy into anything near a reasonable condition of invulnerability. I cannot say that I think we are in that reasonable condition at this

moment. Sir Charles Dilke says that the enormous expense of our navy and army would have frightened our ancestors. How so? He forgets that an infinitely poorer, and much smaller population spent something like £1,000,000,000, exclusive of the debt incurred, between 1793 and 1815 on the Great War.

In any case we now get better value for our money. Periodically we are made to rub our eyes at revelations of jobbery, carelessness and the rest in regard to the navy, its architecture, its equipment and its administration; the alleged purloining of the code of signals being the last great scandal. What has occurred in regard to our War Office lately, naturally makes us suspicious and anxious regarding the Admiralty. But as touching these scandals and lapses, does any one suppose that if as full a light played on the French and Russian navy as plays on ours, either would be found to be freer from offence? Our naval architects and engineers strain every nerve to keep abreast of the times. The French are for the moment ahead of us in the matter of submarine boats, though the advantage is a disputed one. Nor must we forget the vast improvement which has taken place in manning the fleet. In the early part of the century impressment was general; and often enough prisoners were liberated from captivity to serve on board His Majesty's ships. As in the army, the *personnel* of the service has greatly improved. The men are better paid, clothed and fed; better cared for generally. In sickness they are tenderly nursed, in health they

are treated as intelligent human beings, requiring humane consideration and rational amusement. We have an effective naval reserve, a fine body of artillery volunteers, and admirable training ships. The instruction of officers has advanced considerably; but the number of officers and men is insufficient. The improvement in technical matters may be left to the author of the volume dealing with this subject. All the world knows they have been stupendous.

Great as has been the improvement in the *personnel* and *matériel* of our army and navy during the century, and decided as the progress during the past quarter of a century toward an organised system of imperial defence, there is still much to be accomplished. Throughout the century an absurd jealousy—apart from the question of loaves and fishes, from which point of view the jealousy is lamentable, though scarcely absurd—has existed between the army and navy, a jealousy which has often paralysed action, and prevented progress, resulting in both services suffering.* As a private matter they deserved to suffer; but, unfortunately, the public has been exposed to serious risks in consequence of this game of cross purposes. It is only fair to say that recent years have seen an abatement of this mischievous rivalry, and that healthy emulation is taking its place. Nothing could tend so materially to obliterate the scandal altogether, as the federation of all our defensive-offensive forces throughout the Empire.

* The snubbing of the Royal Marines, a most useful service, is another scandal.

Our various trade routes represent something like 90,000 miles of communication; and in their defence we need more coaling stations, even if by happy accident we have possessed ourselves of the bare minimum essential for our purpose. Our Mediterranean route to India gives us coaling stations at Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, the Suez Canal and Aden. Yet during the century we have heard the jug-jug cry that Gibraltar should be given up to Spain. Fortunately we may hope that we have heard the last of this sentimental nonsense. Our route to India via the Cape gives several houses of call on the West Coast; a fact which ought in itself to silence those superficial critics who ask why we should retain these fever-haunted shores. It is certainly unfortunate that we allowed France to take Madagascar, which really was ours by all moral right, and was as clearly a natural appanage of our South African Empire. We have now only Mauritius and its dependencies, certain small islands scattered over the Indian Ocean, between the Cape and our Indian Empire, though in this connection Zanzibar must not, of course, be forgotten.

I must say in conclusion that the serious struggle in which we are now engaged with the rebellious Boers of South Africa, has administered a much needed tonic and stimulant to our countrymen the Empire over. It has brought the people to look at, and to begin to understand, those far-reaching questions of imperial safety and national insurance, which the few have seen and understood for years, and have

vainly striven to impress upon their fellow-citizens. The supineness which formerly characterised the introduction to a mixed company of such matters as imperial defence, has given place to a healthy interest; and as the century closes, we are in a fair way to the recognition of those dangers to our corporate existence and continued prosperity which have hitherto been dismissed as the nervous spasms of the alarmist. With the recognition of these dangers is coming a determined resolution to face them. It may, let us hope, be safely assumed that we mean henceforth to meet our enemies in the gate.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE KEYSTONE OF THE EMPIRE.

It has happened, and there is a certain irony of fate about the circumstance, that the last few months of the penultimate year of the century, and the earlier months of the latest year of all, have seen the British Empire in the throes of a struggle with the Boer Republics of South Africa, of such unexpected difficulty and duration, that at one time it was not possible for the informed Briton, however self-respecting, to feel sure of the ultimate issue. Failure to bring these petty communities—it is absurd to call them states—to absolute and complete submission, meant and means, the break up and ruin of the Empire, by which I would say that the Empire, as a distinct entity, could never survive the blow, moral and material, of such a confession of weakness. The full appreciation of this fact was somewhat late in coming, but it has, perhaps we may say, come now; but so far as my particular duty is concerned, this unhappy contest, with its humiliating tale of errors of omission and commission, and its revelation of incompetence in high places, has greatly complicated my task, since, before the pressure of public opinion and action on the part of the metropolis and the provinces of the Empire, had

stiffened the back of the Government, it was, as I have said, impossible for the most ardent believer in the British race and the British Empire to feel entire confidence as to the future. Even now it is impossible to feel certain as to the morrow. Every day made it more and more obvious that the French were spoiling for a fight, the military party apparently deterred from throwing down the gauntlet only by considerations of an immediately prudential character as touching the welfare of the Exhibition, and by the fact that the conspiracy to undermine the power of the Shereef in Morocco is not yet ripe. We were, too, face to face with that other conspiracy of the Africander Bond and its English allies, the Little Englanders and Conciliation Committees, the men really responsible for the war, and who are now working in unison to rob the British Empire of the fruits of its serious sacrifices in men and in treasure.

As to the aforesaid mistakes of omission and commission in the conduct of the war, I have already, in previous chapters, said what was necessary. I have only to add here that although I am writing before the war has been brought to a close, and before the publication of an authoritative announcement on the part of the Government as to the terms of the final settlement, I am inwardly convinced that our rulers are of the same mind as the vast majority of their countrymen, and are determined that the best blood of the nation shall not be sacrificed for naught; and assuredly if any settlement were arrived at which fell short of the absolute submission and elimination

of the Boer Republics, the war would not only be barren of beneficial results, but the prelude to another bloody war, and only too possible national disaster in the future.*

The colonists, too, must be considered. Their splendid services—it is scarcely too much to say that they have pointed out the way to subdue the Boers —entitle them to the fullest consideration. Woe betide the Empire if the wishes, the just and legitimate wishes, of the colonists are not given the utmost measure of consideration. They would never forgive the imperial authorities if there should be any paltering with the momentous issues coming up for settlement. Our failure to subdue the Boers would have meant a death-blow to the imperial idea; for Great Britain would have no longer occupied the position, even, of a first-rate power. Similarly, any weak-kneedness about the settlement would mean nothing less. The colonies are fighting for Great Britain, not only because blood is thicker than water, but because they regard Great Britain as the nucleus of a World-Empire, grandly powerful and benignly beneficent, an Empire to belong to which is an honour, and from which they can look for protection in the hour of their need; an Empire ready to hold up the banner of the British race before the whole world, and to defend it where and when it should be assailed. Should they be disappointed in the Motherland, sentiments of pride and affection

* Since the above was written satisfactory assurances have been given by Lord Salisbury, and by the votes at the polls.

will give place to feelings of disgust and contempt. But as I have already said, with Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office, Mr. Chamberlain at the Colonial Office, Sir Alfred Milner in diplomatic and Lord Kitchener in military command at the Cape, the most apprehensive and nervous among us have no cause to fear for the future.

The value of South Africa to the Empire is obviously by no means to be measured by its individual value, great and growing though that value be. Strategically, geographically and commercially it is the keystone of the Empire. It is absolutely necessary that we should hold it, in order to guard and secure our trade routes to India, Australia, and the great and growing inter-colonial trade between the Cape and Canada on the one hand, and the Cape and the Antipodes on the other. For reasons already indicated, I have postponed dealing with the rise and progress of this great and supremely interesting dependency until the rest of my task was discharged. It happens that I have been more closely associated with this portion of Her Majesty's Empire than any other; but not for that reason, but because no student of imperial politics can blind himself to the fact that South Africa is the pivot of the whole system, I must deal, more or less fully with its history during the century, though the fact that the complete story is in the hands of the man of all others most competent to tell it, Professor Theal, relieves me from the necessity of treating any issues save those of primary imperial significance.

It is a curious fact that although the area of the British Empire has increased sixfold during the century, almost all the developments which have taken place since the year 1800 may be regarded as expansions of the germs then in existence. In other words the Empire was founded, so far as the nucleus of its several great groups is concerned, prior to 1801. This is true at all events of the American, Asian and Australasian groups; and although it is not strictly true of the South African colonies, it must be remembered that we actually possessed the Cape of Good Hope in 1801, for we seized it in 1795 and did not relinquish it until 1803, when under the provisions of the Treaty of Amiens we surrendered it to the Batavian Government. The battle of Trafalgar practically put the whole of the colonies held by continental nations at our mercy; though we made exceedingly moderate use of our opportunities. But the Cape of Good Hope, always regarded as a desirable possession, on account of its strategical importance and its importance as a place of call *en route* to India, was promptly re-occupied. Trafalgar was fought on the 21st October, 1805. The Cape was re-conquered in January, 1806. I say re-conquered, because the Batavian Governor, General Janssens, made a respectable show of fight; but he finally capitulated after about three weeks' resistance to General Baird on the 27th January, 1806. Our position at the Cape was regularised by the Treaty of Paris in 1815, when the King of the Netherlands formally ceded it to Great Britain; the

arrangement being clenched, so to speak, by a handsome money payment.

It is worthy of remark that our previous occupation can scarcely be regarded as a definitive act of annexation; since we took possession of the Cape as the ally and defender of the Prince of Orange; and held it technically on the Prince's behalf. Holland, however, like so many of the nations we took under our wing, did not stand by us, a considerable section of the people of the Netherlands actually welcomed the French invaders; and when finally after twenty years of exile, the House of Nassau was restored to authority, British sacrifices had been too great and too prolonged to make the restitution of the Cape either just or expedient. Into this question it is not necessary to enter. Suffice it to say that no sooner had General Craig and Admiral Elphinstone established British authority at the Cape, and General Craig had been appointed Governor, than we began to reduce the country to a condition of order. It greatly needed a firm hand; for, when the British appeared on the scene, a very large section of the colonists were in open rebellion against the all-too-arbitrary and pusillanimous Dutch Government, and had actually gone the length of proclaiming an independent republic. General Craig was a man of energetic temperament. He had, too, administrative ability. During his two years of office he raised and drilled a regiment of Hottentots; erected forts in and about Cape Town, and what is now

Port Elizabeth, and gave a much needed stimulus to public business.

He was succeeded by Earl Macartney in 1797, who extended the boundaries of the colony considerably; though his somewhat high-handed proceedings did not always find favour in the eyes of the Dutch colonists, who often enough endeavoured to thwart and checkmate his schemes. Here we see the germ of a rivalry which in various shapes and forms has continued from that day to this, and with which in this rapid survey it will be necessary to deal. Sir George Young succeeded Lord Macartney, and on the surrender of the settlement to the Dutch East India Company, General Janssens was appointed governor, and during his term of office (1803–06) did his utmost to follow up the good work of his predecessors. Janssens was a man of enlightened views, considering the times in which he lived. He issued a proclamation declaring that the Government must derive its prosperity from the quantity and quality of its productions alone; and that it must rely for its advance on the increase of general civilisation and industry. He urged the farmers to introduce merino sheep, and to grow wool; and he initiated such economic and political reforms as were possible. On the other hand, he has been sharply criticised for holding that it would be foolish to attempt to strengthen the Cape with a new settlement. Janssens declared that having regard to the then existing condition of the colony, he could not conceive what the existing population or

the up-growing children were to turn their hands to, as a means of livelihood. It is scarcely just to this excellent governor to assume that at the time he wrote he had misjudged the situation. We know how hard-pushed the earlier generations of Dutch colonists had been to keep the wolf from the door. In any case the English governors who immediately succeeded Janssens, did not make any effort to attract fresh settlers; though for political reasons alone, it would have been wise to plant British colonists in the territories successively added to the original settlement. The first really effective attempt in this direction was made in 1820, when 5,000 pioneers were introduced into the Eastern Province. In sober truth the early British governors had so much work on their hands of an immediate and pressing nature, they had scarcely the time to think of those larger schemes of settlement and colonisation, which had they been initiated earlier, might have exercised a most beneficial influence over the destinies of the country by absorbing the Dutch at a time when their numbers were so small that their absorption would have been comparatively easy; though obviously not so easy as the absorption of the French and Italian refugees of 1688 by the Netherlanders. In 1806 the European population of the colony was 26,720 souls out of a total population of 74,000. It would appear that prior to 1820 there had been no introductions of English blood into the community, save for a few stray settlers and traders who chanced to tumble, as it were, into the

country. How much might have been effected by sufficiently far-seeing governments to alternate if not obliterate the harsher and more anti-European, not to say Anglophobic, characteristics of the Boers, by a process of swamping, can be the more readily understood when it is remembered that during the early part of the century, the distress at home was so acute that thousands of families would have welcomed the chance of bettering their position in British colonies had they been encouraged to take the step; or had the way been prepared, no matter in how perfunctory a manner, for them. But in 1815 only 2,000 persons in all quitted the kingdom, and in the following years, when the volume of emigration grew by leaps and bounds, the great mass of the outgoers went to America; while such of them as chose our own colonies, chose Australia and Canada, but for the most part left South Africa severely alone. To-day the population of the Cape exceeds two millions, and of this total upwards of 400,000 are of European origin, though of these probably 62 per cent. must be regarded as of Franco-Dutch descent. Had Great Britain exercised a little prescience, ever so little, especially during the first half of the century, this unfortunate disparity between Dutch and English to the advantage of the former might have been entirely reversed; and what is more, the Cape might have possessed a white population well in excess of the total of the aboriginal peoples.

The country is well able to support a large

white population; the greater part of the land being neglected, mainly by reason of two elemental facts. It has been allowed to drift into the hands of the Dutch, whose methods of cultivation, when they cultivate at all, are primitive in the extreme, while the problem of how to store the water which either runs thirty or forty feet underground or through torrential rivers into the sea, and is consequently wasted, has never been faced. Still notwithstanding, the numerous drawbacks to progress occasioned by the short-sightedness of home and colonial governments and of the colonists themselves, by racial jealousies, and frequent native wars, the increase in the area of Cape Colony alone, to leave out of account the enormous increase in the area of British territory beyond the boundaries of that colony, has been sufficiently remarkable. In 1800, it comprised about 120,000, and to-day it is 290,000 square miles. In 1806 the exports amounted in value to £60,000 and the imports to £100,000. In 1898-99 the imports were represented by the sum of nearly 18 millions sterling and the exports amounted to 19¼ millions. Wonderful progress, due of course, in the main, to the discovery of diamonds in Griqualand West, and of gold in the Transvaal.

But in the early days of the century, life at the Cape was not a case of diamonds and gold; it was a case of very small beer indeed. The Dutch had already developed the disease of earth hunger, and by the time the British appeared on the scene, had spread themselves over vast areas of territory which

they were quite unable, and no less unwilling, to cultivate properly. At that time the cultivation of land in England was, of course, primitive enough. It was before the era of steam and machinery, which dates from the end of the last century in the department of manufactures, and was not applied to agricultural pursuits until the century was far advanced. Corn was cut with a reaping hook which differed not at all from the implement used by the Romans; and grain was separated from its straw by the time-honoured practice of hand threshing. It was not until 1823 that Smith of Deanston introduced deep drainage, thereby vastly improving the yield of grain and grass crops. The first reaping machine made its appearance in 1852; and the steam plough's advent is dated some three years later.

Remembering all this, and knowing that fields were allowed to lie fallow when exhausted by crops until nature had restored their capabilities, and that the enormous advances made in the feeding and breeding of sheep and cattle do not belong to the earlier decades of the century, one is inclined to ask oneself what particular improvement Lord Macartney could have introduced upon the cultural methods and implements employed — primitive though they must have been—by the Cape husbandmen of a hundred years ago. He is said to have, and it is evident that he actually did, accomplish something in this direction, since without imposing fresh taxes, indeed many of those in force were considerably lightened, he increased the revenue

substantially. Of course the money was not wholly derived from the tax on land and agriculture; though seeing that agriculture was the sole industry of the colony, it may be granted that it had to come out of the land in the last event.

The year following the re-occupation of the Cape saw the abolition of the slave trade; though the slaves were not emancipated until 1834. Lord Caledon was appointed governor in 1807. He established Circuit Courts and postal communication, and concerned himself honourably with the grievances of the Hottentots. It is not possible to justify the subsequent arbitrary proceedings against the last of the Hottentot chiefs; still it does not appear that the governor was directly responsible in the matter. In any case he lost what popularity he may have enjoyed with the Boers, as the penalty of instituting Circuit Courts, presided over by two members of the Supreme Court, whose duty it was to investigate into the charges of murder and cruelty brought against them. No charge of murder was substantiated; but charges of aggravated assaults were, and several Boers were fined and imprisoned besides being mulcted in the costs of the prosecution. These facts are mentioned specially, because it will be necessary to explain one of the most potent causes operating during the century, to retard the progress of South Africa. This potent influence has been the constant feud between English and Dutch; a feud which had no kind of direct connection with the substitution of British for Netherland-

ish authority, for the Boers have, at no time of their history, cherished the remotest affection for their own Mother Country; it had its origin in the determination of the British Government to enforce a more humane and consistent policy in the treatment, by the whites indifferently, of the aboriginal peoples, and to compel the Boers to forego their claim to treat these peoples in accordance with their own extraordinary ideas of right and wrong, notions which being interpreted meant and mean, roughly speaking, the settled conviction that any Boer had and has the moral and legal right to deal with any native according to the dictates of his own inner consciousness. It was not long before the utter irreconcilability of British and Boer ideas as to the status and treatment of subject races bore fruit; and the fruit it has borne, perennial apples of discord, has been borne continuously throughout the century.

The British Government, under Sir John Cradock, did what it could, according to its light, to conciliate the Boers, and reconcile them to the altered conditions consequent upon the abolition of slavery. But the Boers were not disposed to accept any advance short of the universal recognition of their claim to treat the natives as personal goods and chattels. Sir John Cradock went a long way, much too long a way, I think, from the point of view of justice and humanity, to meet their wishes. His proclamation giving authority to the landdrosts to seize any Hottentot child of the age of eight years, whose parents had

been in his service at the time of his birth, and to apprentice him as he might think proper, was obviously directly at variance with the spirit of the abolition law. Unjustifiable as this ill-advised and clumsy act of *ultra vires* was, it had the admitted demerit of failing entirely of its purpose; for it did not appease the Dutch in the slightest degree. During the very year, 1815, that the Cape was formally made over to England by the Treaty of Vienna, in return for a sum of money and the recognition of the Dutch claims to Java, an event occurred which, although it may be regarded as symptomatic rather than causative, has embittered the relations of Dutch and English in South Africa ever since. It may be considered to epitomise, or, more correctly, as an exemplar of that unhappy series of disputes and conflicts between the two white races of South Africa, which has done more to retard the progress of the sub-continent than the numerous wars with the various tribes of Kaffirs which have periodically disturbed the peace of the land. These wars were, of course, inevitable and unavoidable; and so in a measure was the unhappy Slagter's Nek affair. The consequences following upon it might have been minimised had we decided to rule the Dutch with a strong hand, to stamp out their nationality and their language as they had stamped out the nationality and the language of the French refugees in the latter part of the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth centuries. Certain tentative efforts were made to establish the English language; but since they were half-hearted, their only

effect was to irritate the Dutch. They accomplished nothing. To adopt strong measures to coerce the Boers was, of course, at variance with the fashionable doctrine of permitting full freedom to all the subjects of the King; which, while it was little more than the technical or academic enforcement on paper of a liberal theory in the metropolis of the Empire, was a very binding and operative principle in His Majesty's remote dependencies. But the only really effective way of making English ideas of justice to the natives predominant, and of spreading English influence and the English tongue in the colony, was to plant English families thickly in the midst of the old Dutch population. This, as we have seen, was not done; not even in the humblest manner. What we did was to force the Dutch to accept an advanced theory of the equality of all men, white or black, at a time when the creed insisted upon was—it is still—so absolutely strange to them as to be only comprehensible as a symptom of mental aberration. In point of fact, the Boers then and now regarded and continue to regard this creed as the creed of "cranks." The present writer, scant as is his sympathy with the tactics and policy of later Boerdom, or with the brutal views and actions of the Boers in dealing with the natives, does not wish to darken judgment by denying that there is much justification for the Boers' intolerance of British policy toward the aboriginal peoples of South Africa. Common sense, supposed to be the prerogative and inheritance of the Anglo-Saxon race, is the one quality in which

it is most woefully deficient when it has been effectually brought under the dominance of a catch-word or shibboleth. It becomes intoxicated with the name, and its headlong desire to be consistently loyal to an idea, results in its becoming most inconsistently disloyal to reason. Compromise, which in building up our constitution has been the essence of its healthy elasticity and adaptability to national needs, is treated as a thing abhorred and unclean, should it attempt to obtrude itself so as to jeopardise the absolutely unfettered operation of a mere academic principle, which, having fought strenuously for acceptance and triumphed over opposition, becomes thenceforth a sacred thing, enshrined and inviolate, to question which in the smallest degree is tantamount to committing an act of high treason. This has been so, and I have given elsewhere other instances of the operation of this unhappy weakness in our national character, throughout our recent history. The shibboleth of the equality of man, black and white, has tyrannised over the better sense of the British nation, just as the shibboleth of free trade has enslaved the reason of the inhabitants of the British Isles. Nor is it possible to applaud this extraordinary doggedness on the score that it indicates the backbone and staunchness of our race. It is simply a sign of intellectual sloth. It needs the force of sledge-hammers—men have to scream and cry and shout and thump all over the country, before they can drive anything into the exceedingly unreceptive British brain; and it needs nothing less than

a powerful explosive to dislodge a belief once it is fairly implanted. The mischief of this slowness to learn, and reluctance to unlearn is, that so long a time is needed to inculcate any truth, there is danger that when it is learned it will have become a lie.

So far, however, as the Slagter's Nek business is concerned, it is not necessary to blame the Colonial Government for the course pursued. One Bezuidenhout refused to surrender to take his trial on the charge of ill-treating a Hottentot; he openly defied the officer of the court; he fired upon the small body of soldiers sent to arrest him; in brief, he brought his fate upon his own head, for in subsequent firing he lost his life. His relatives and friends who took up arms against the British Government to avenge his death, were insurgents pure and simple; and when defeated and captured, they justly suffered the penalty of treason—death. That five of them were actually executed, was probably an unavoidable minatory measure. But although it awed the Boers momentarily, it sowed the seed of future troubles—troubles continuous and grave, growing in gravity throughout the century. That it was absolutely necessary to impress upon the Boers the great fact that the aboriginal races of Africa were men, and as such were entitled to be treated as fellow-creatures by the whites, is unquestionable; but in pushing the doctrine of abstract equality to the lengths English and Colonial doctrinaires have pushed it, especially in giving electoral rights to the black races, the course of events is surely proving that the Dutch

conception of State expediency; and of a sovereign people's duty to itself is the safe and sensible one, while the British view is the dangerous and sentimental one. So much in justice to the Dutch. Obviously I am speaking merely of views as to political and social equality; and I am very far from championing the absolute negation of all principles of humanity and equity which, on the whole, has characterised Dutch methods with the natives; methods often enough accentuated by gross cruelty.

The tenets of Exeter Hall have been adoptea more or less in their entirety throughout the greater part of British South Africa; and it is indisputable that the progress of the country has been retarded and its stability jeopardised in consequence. The future alone will prove whether social disaster will not be the price South Africa will be called upon to pay for allowing sentiment to overrule common sense.

These facts in the early history of British rule in South Africa, and the considerations growing out of them, have been dealt with at some length, because they are essential to the correct understanding of the future course of that history; and tend to elucidate the narrative of the ebb and flow of British influence in that country. It is necessary to turn aside from the story of the growing discord between Dutch and English, in order to refer to the Kaffir wars, which, following one another in fairly brisk succession, were so costly and recurrent that the very name of South Africa became a by-

word in Great Britain for all that was contentious and uncomfortable; and the Cape came to be regarded as an almost intolerable burthen and nuisance, a country which drew upon the Mother Country's resources, a burthen and nuisance only endured because of the Cape's strategical importance as a house of call on the high-road to India. It is curious to note that the people of the British Isles, who had willingly disbursed millions—two thousand millions in current expenditure and debts incurred, in order to meddle in the affairs of the Continent, for the most part affairs which did not concern them—should have grudged the comparatively small outlay necessitated in order to make available for the general purposes of the Empire those lands which were the principal assets to be set against this enormous outlay. In this the nation only followed the caprice, idiosyncrasy, peculiarity—what shall I call it?—of the individual. Men will strain every nerve and expend every penny they possess to gain a certain end or possession upon whose upkeep when once gained they will begrudge the smallest future outlay.

The story of these endless Kaffir wars will doubtless be told in another volume; and it is not my purpose here to trace it in detail. The first broke out in 1811 on the eastern frontier, and resulted in the expulsion of the Kaffirs from the Zuurveld. Colonel Collins, the commissioner, had recommended that the country should be portioned off among white settlers. Colonel Graham, who had

conducted the operations against the natives, tried to give effect to these recommendations; but it was found impossible to induce many burghers to accept the farms, although they far exceeded in area the size proposed by Colonel Collins. Consequently the Kaffirs very soon made an attempt to re-occupy the country, though their efforts resulted in dire failure. Lord Charles Somerset ultimately subdued the confederacy of native chiefs; and being deeply impressed with the country, painted its advantages and possibilities in glowing terms. His despatches exercised so powerful an influence in England, that Parliament voted £50,000 in aid of colonising the country, and invited persons willing to become settlers in it to send in their applications. Now the significant fact about this invitation is, that although the government proposal was very far from being of that munificent character it has been represented in some quarters, nearly 90,000 persons made application, though less than 5,000 could be sent out.

It would be highly instructive and interesting, were it possible for me to do so, to follow the fortunes of these colonists; I must content myself with the knowledge that the story will be fully told elsewhere. I have referred to this famous Albany settlement more than once already; and I must be pardoned for referring to it again, and at some length, because to my mind it was in itself, especially when regarded as an example to follow, an event of the highest imperial moment. As I have

said, the inducements held out to these colonists by no means erred on the side of liberality. Something was done for them at the outset, it is true. They were granted land and conveyed to it; they were given implements, and for a certain period they were provided with food. Still they had to face entirely fresh conditions of life, and although the greater number of them were townsfolk, they adapted themselves in a manner little short of marvellous to the pioneer work of fencing in the country. In this connection I am reminded of the remark of a well-known authority, Mr. Hedger-Wallace, "that colonial agriculture is a subject to be specially studied, and ought not to be regarded as English agriculture transplanted." No doubt the success of the Eastern Province pioneers was largely due to the fact that they had all to learn and a determination to learn it, and nothing to unlearn. But the obstacles in their path were enormous. Between 1820 and 1850 they had to contend with three formidable Kaffir outbreaks. In the first war the Kaffirs carried off 111,418 head of cattle, 156,878 sheep and goats, 5,438 horses and 58 waggons. They burnt 456 farmhouses, pillaged 300 homesteads and stores and murdered hundreds of the colonists, and inflicted a loss upon the settlement of £300,000. These figures are pertinent as showing the wonderful progress those plucky pioneers had made in fourteen years.

The losses in the succeeding wars of 1846 and 1850–52 were much greater than in the earlier war,

but notwithstanding the terrible drain upon the country occasioned by these sanguinary contests, notwithstanding the multifarious difficulties which had to be surmounted, the settlers of 1820 succeeded in overcoming everything, and in founding a province which to-day may be regarded as the most populous and progressive portion of Cape Colony. The ordinary man would imagine that such a record as this, the triumphant success of a handful of men selected from every grade of society—men who had followed almost every trade and calling save that of agriculture, would have encouraged our rulers to repeat an experiment so rich in splendid results, results achieved in the very teeth of superlative obstacles and difficulties, obstacles and difficulties which it is obvious would be minimised in subsequent experiments of a like nature. The settlers of Algoa Bay and their descendants have come to be regarded as the backbone of British South Africa. With the colonists of Natal, they constitute the first line of defence of the British Empire in South Africa. It is an everlasting reproach to successive British governments, from that time to the present moment, that this enlightened and statesmanlike scheme, which resulted not only in helping to relieve acute distress at home, and in founding a powerful province of the Empire across the seas, but has tended in a measure to adjust the balance between Dutch and British in South Africa, has not been elevated into a permanent system. The progress of South Africa has been remarkable; the progress of the

Empire as a whole has been almost phenomenal; but it might have been more than phenomenal, if the expression be allowed to pass, had our rulers seen the wisdom of periodically transferring the surplus and unemployed population of these islands to such lands as might be available in the colonies. Much more might have been done in this direction in those days before the Crown alienated its sovereign prerogatives in the lands of the colonies. Much might have been done since those days, in the case of several colonies. The selfishness and short-sightedness of the Cape, or rather the jealous exclusiveness of the Dutch at the Cape, and the determination of the rulers of Australasia, the workmen, to keep that huge continent a close preserve for themselves and their children, have stood in the way of the adoption of any such scheme in Africa and Australia. The settlement of 1820 stands almost alone; in any case it is the great object-lesson in successful colonisation of the century. What was done then, might have been done again and again and with similar magnificent results. The opportunity again presents itself of repeating the experiment; and it is to be hoped that the century upon which we are about to enter, will witness many such enterprises. The scale needs to be enlarged and the organisation perfected.

I have already said that the Albany, or Port Elizabeth settlement of 1820, must be regarded as the most important, it might almost be said the only effort on the part of British governments to

give a British cast to a British colony; though even in this it would be to do the Government too much honour to pretend to believe that any such statesmanlike idea was at the root of their action. Be this as it may, the Albany settlers have proved themselves the backbone of the colony, as they have been the connecting link which has bound it, in sentiment that is to say, to the Mother Country. We have seen how the unfortunate event of 1815, the Slagter's Nek affair, confirmed the already existing disaffection of the Dutch. The official substitution of the English language for Dutch in 1822, at a time when the Eastern Province was in its infancy, and the Western Province, the seat of government, almost exclusively Dutch, was a blunder, not in principle, but as to time and place. This step should have been worked up to by a gradual process of education and absorption; no more convincing proof of its inefficacy could be cited than the fact that upwards of half a century later, the official language was made bi-lingual. The only effect the proclamation of 1822 had, was to still further irritate and incense the Boers.

The same year saw another unwise enactment added to the statute-book—a proclamation prohibiting the convening of any public meeting without official sanction. Lord Charles Somerset also signalised his long term of office by an attempt to interfere with the liberty of the press. It is necessary to remember all these things, in order to be in a position to pass a perfectly fair and unbiassed judg-

ment on the unhappy events now transpiring, and in order to get a sound understanding of all the causes which have retarded the progress of this portion of Her Majesty's dominions. As a matter of fact, this liberty of the press question led to a contest of six or seven years' duration between Mr. Fairbairn, the champion of liberty, and Lord Charles Somerset, and it was not until 1828 that the former succeeded in vindicating the rights of the press to give expression, fairly and fearlessly, to such opinions on public events as might seem to the conductors of newspapers good and expedient.

I must leave the task of writing the detailed history of what actually led up to the grand exodus of the Dutch Voortrekkers, to another hand. It will be sufficient to say here that the ridiculous policy of Lord Glenelg; who was almost as unsuccessful in dealing with colonial affairs as Mr. Gladstone himself, fairly disgusted the Dutch colonists, who naturally could not understand that kind of sentimentality, or decayed moral sense, which would permit a sovereign race to go back upon its own acts, and after conquering a native tribe and solemnly annexing their territory, return it to the vanquished people with apologies for having made a mistake. No doubt there was something to be said for the Kaffirs; but nothing could excuse this insane interference of the Home Government with the work achieved by the Governor, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, and the colonists, English and Dutch, who loyally assisted him.

It cannot be said that this was the sole or indeed the principal cause of the Boer migration of 1835–6. The compulsory emancipation of the slaves, who under Mr. Buxton's bill became free throughout the British dominions on December 1, 1834, provided the sum of £20,000,000, voted by Parliament, to indemnify the slaveholders, and £1,200,000, or about £85 for each slave, was apportioned to the owners of slaves in Cape Colony. There can be no doubt that, apart from the real loss inflicted, in many cases, on the Dutch owners by this measure, they were deeply incensed at what they considered an unjustifiable interference with their domestic, and as they saw it, purely private affairs. Undeniably a large portion of the money voted, stuck to the palms of the agents and middle-men who undertook to distribute the award, which instead of being payable in London should have been distributed by the Government in the colony itself.

It was this and kindred annoyances and vexations, having as their basis, however, the irreconcilable divergence of view as to the treatment of subject peoples, which so exasperated the Boers that they determined to "trek" into the wilderness. The Vaal provinces, the Transvaal and Orange Free State and Natal, resulted from this exodus. It is generally held that this "trek," this foundation of the Boer republics, constitutes one of the greatest checks to the growth of the Empire the century has seen. This, however, is a somewhat superficial view. The outcome of the duel between English and Dutch

in South Africa is now, humanly speaking, assured; but in any case, I for one have never lost the conviction that, by whatsoever means or howsoever delayed, the ultimate triumph of British institutions and of the English language throughout the sub-continent was not in the nature of a problematical proposition, but on the contrary was a certainty. Strength must swallow weakness, and the language of Shakespeare and Bunyan must in the end obliterate the depraved patois, the "taal," which is the colloquial tongue of the backward peoples of South Africa. Whether the means were peaceful and gradual or violent and sudden, the recalcitrant Dutch of South Africa had sooner or later to fall into line with the progressive British elements.

Looking at the inevitable result, the Boers must be regarded as the pioneers, albeit unconscious and unwilling pioneers, of Empire in South Africa. The British element in the population can scarcely be said to have existed until 1820; and after that date that element was too meagre and too much concerned with its special work, the development of Albany and Kaffraria, to make it possible for it, of its own initiative, to attempt to extend the boundaries of civilisation in Africa. The Boers in leaving Cape Colony, were, of course, endeavouring to escape from a civilisation which went far beyond the standard they recognised. The enforced payment of taxes, and the restrictions on their right to treat the natives as they chose, rendered life irksome to a race accustomed for two centuries to almost com-

plete immunity from any restraining force so far as their dealings with the natives were concerned; and to a far more go-as-you-please and elementary system of taxation than the complicated system introduced by the British. No doubt, however, what they most resented was the Order in Council of 1834, which put the Hottentot on an equality, so far as all civil rights went, with the white man.

The Boer claimed then, as he claims now, to have the sole control, as an individual, over the lives, property, the very souls of the natives. England claimed then, as she now claims, justice for the black races, humane treatment in place of the cruel and barbarous treatment to which the Boers subjected, and still subject, the natives. The Boers from the first set their faces like flints against these ideals. The struggle between Boer and Briton in South Africa has been, and is, a struggle between two wholly antagonistic ideals; the Boers have fought for individual licence, especially as concerns their dealings with the natives, while the British have fought for and are fighting for corporate liberty and justice to the natives. The trend of events, that is to say, the development of the country, has given a political complexion to these antagonistic ideas; and the war in South Africa has come to be a war between the Dutch Africander and his creatures, the mercenaries his new-found wealth has enabled him to attach to his standard, who desire to set up a United Dutch Republic, not merely to embrace the Transvaal and Orange Free State, but the whole of

South Africa—Cape Colony, Natal and Rhodesia, and the British Government, whose aims are now, and have been for a quarter of a century, to federate all the States of South Africa under one Central Government, all, of course, owning allegiance to the British Empire, and as things have now shaped themselves, to the British flag.

The duel between British and Dutch resulted in the ultimate discomfiture of the latter in the country now forming the British colony of Natal. This was in 1842. On the other hand the Sand River Convention of 1852 eventuated in the Transvaal being ceded to the Boers; while two years later, in a more complete manner still, we acknowledged the independence of the Orange Free State. It was a weak moment in our national history when we elected to recognise the independence of these Dutch settlements; an evil day for Great Britain; and the Empire has paid dearly for entrusting its fortunes to the Manchester school of politicians, I will not call them statesmen, for this school was assuredly the most short-sighted and pernicious of any school of politicians which has ever held the reins of power in this country. It was, as has been said, in 1852 that the Boers were granted their independence; but a few years later Sir George Grey saw his way to retrieve the mischief he so clearly foresaw as the inevitable consequence of this State blunder. Sir George Grey was not permitted to carry out his scheme. As it was, constant civil strife, and even civil war, succeeded the granting of independence; and it was not

until 1864 that the South African Republic emerged as a single state. In 1876–77 President Burgers was defied by Secocœni, a northern chief. The Transvaal was practically at his mercy. We stepped in and saved it from ruin and financial chaos; and the burghers from imminent risk of being "eaten up," not only by Secocœni, but by Cetewayo's impis, who, had we not stood between, would have swept over the land, and in their avenging flight stamped the Boers flat on the veldt. Unfortunately we entrusted the government of the country to a martinet, Sir Owen Lanyon, who neglected to consider sufficiently the natural feelings and susceptibilities of the Boers. Their leaders and representatives, uncouth and unlettered men it is true, but entitled to respect by reason of their importance in the eyes of their countrymen, were kept dusting their heels in anterooms, like so many importunate tradesmen, by the superfine striplings, in civil and military capacities, whom the British Government deputed to examine into their grievances. We neglected, too, to keep our promise, a rash one no doubt, to give them parliamentary institutions. Then came the rebellion for which our conduct afforded some excuse. Justice compels the admission. Nevertheless we had relieved the country from hopeless bankruptcy, and from impending disaster at the hands of Kaffir hordes; Lord, then Sir Garnet, Wolseley had solemnly declared that so long as the sun shone, the British flag should fly over the country, and to give it up in the face of defeat, was an act of criminal folly for which

we have paid, as we deserved to pay, the penalty. Whatever the motive of this rash act, every one who had lived in South Africa, as I had lived, everyone who knew the conditions of our tenure of that country, and who had studied its complex political problems, knew that we had made the position of Great Britain in South Africa impossible, for they knew that the only way to ensure civil, political and social peace between Englishmen and Dutchmen in South Africa, was for England to conquer fairly the latter, and teach them once and for all that Great Britain was the mistress of the whole country; they knew that a colossal and irreparable mistake had been made, a mistake which they greatly feared, however much they might hope against hope, could only be rectified at a cost in treasure, life and human suffering, a hundred-fold greater than that which would have sufficed to tranquillise South Africa in 1880.

Then came those lame and inefficient instruments by which a feeble government tried to evade the consequences of its pusillanimity. The Convention of 1881, weak as it was as a charter of rights for Englishmen in the Transvaal, was rendered even more ineffectual as amended in 1884. The ink was scarcely dry upon this document before the Boers, who almost to a man regarded us as an effete nation, powerless to uphold our countrymen in Africa, and mortally afraid of themselves, began to show their contempt for such provisions as it did contain for the protection of our imperial interests, and the in-

terests of British subjects in the South-African Republic. We need not go into the story of the Warren expedition of 1884 by which Bechuanaland was preserved from the clutches of the freebooting Boers. Though we saved Bechuanaland, Zululand, a large part of it that is to say, was filched from the Zulus by bands of Boer marauders. Even before 1886 many things were done which must have opened the eyes of the framers and upholders of the policy of conciliation to the futility of that policy.

The Rand was discovered in 1886. It is urged in defence of the policy of Scuttle in the Transvaal, that had British Ministers and Commissioners been able to see into futurity, and that the Transvaal would attract an enormous British population, they would not have drawn up conventions, under which those British settlers possessed so few opportunities of asserting themselves, or maintaining their rights. The defence is entirely inadmissible. As far back as a quarter of a century, private individuals in hundreds who had visited South Africa, knew perfectly well that the Transvaal was not only a highly mineralised country, but a country capable of growing anything; and they had proclaimed the fact publicly in a hundred ways. It is said that an individual is the last person to know in what estimate his neighbours and contemporaries hold him; and it would seem that British Governments are invariably the last to know in what estimate the countries they are called upon to rule are held by the people of those countries. South Africa did not know the

exact day, hour or place of the gold discovery, which has transformed the Transvaal from a province portioned out into so many six-thousand-acre farms, into a country in which farming plays a very unimportant part, so far as wealth, revenue and everything that goes to make a modern state are concerned, but South Africa knew that that discovery would come.

However, the discovery of the Gold Fields very soon wrought an entire change in the spirit of President Kruger's dream. That astute person saw very well that the Englishman would come in his thousands. In 1886 he said that he saw on the horizon a heavy cloud, a dense flight of locusts which was about to cross the border, and settle upon the land, and that its coming boded no good to the pastoral Boer, whose industry would be eaten up and his country devastated. In some such allegory he publicly confessed, in addressing a great meeting of burghers, his fears and convictions for the future. Had he seen his way to keep this advancing army back, he could not have done so; for just at this time the eternal lack of pence was pressing heavily on the little state. As in 1877, and in many a previous year, the exchequer was empty, officials were clamouring for their salaries, and civil war was imminent. Therefore, although the President foresaw the danger to the independence of the state—a state he had even then come to regard as his own particular tillage, his own creation—from the advent of the gold-seekers, his own dire necessities, his own

desperate need of the very metal the diggers had come to unearth, compelled him to welcome them. But that he formed his own plans then and there, there can be no kind of doubt. At first it is probable that he only hoped to stave off the evil day during perhaps his own lifetime. From his own earlier admissions this would seem to have been the case. For it must be remembered that the President had been to England; and although a man of his limited culture would not take away very accurate impressions of our strength and wealth, still his natural keenness must have told him that the estimate in which his burghers regarded the British was a wholly false one. In any case he formed his plans. If the accursed Englishman must come, he should come for the good of the burghers collectively, and especially for the good of the President individually. No Pharaoh should be a harder taskmaster over the Israelites, than he would be over the Uitlanders. By every device known to him and his satellites he would grind out of them the fruits of their labours; and as they grew in numbers and riches, he would protect himself and the burghers against the risk of being overmastered in the Raad by depriving them little by little of every vestige of political power. The course of Transvaal policy since 1886 is well known. The Uitlanders have raised the State from bankruptcy to affluence, from the sum of 2s. 6d., though Mr. Rider Haggard who had the handling of it, assured me it was only a threepenny bit, which we found in the State coffers at

Pretoria in 1877. The revenue before the war amounted to between 4 and 5 millions, and nineteen-twentieths of this money was extracted from Johannesburg.* It is not only that almost every article of food and raiment is taxed, and that the railway charges—government railways of course—are ridiculously high, but almost every industry is converted into a State, or private monopoly. All imported articles of necessity are taxed to the utmost, so as to make it possible for the owners of these monopolies to sell their goods at a profit. It would be amusing were I to enumerate the various articles which are subject to monopolistic rights; but I know that soap, scrubbing-brushes and even water are so treated; and that this alone is sufficient to account for the fact that bitter as are the Uitlanders against the Government, their wives and daughters are more bitter still. No wonder when everything necessary to ensure a cleanly home is made ridiculously dear, in order that some friend at court, who has succeeded in bribing the Pretoria Government, may be able to grow rich.

It must not be thought that I do the President and his Dopper friends the honour of supposing that they, unaided, out of their simple, God-fearing brains, contrived and invented all these devices of extortion and repression. They were quick to recognize that with all their subtlety, their genius for evasion and falsehood, they could not stand against the Uitlanders; among whom, whatever we may think of them in other regards, some of the ablest

* Before June 1, 1900.

men of business in the Empire are to be found. The President was prompt to make good his own disabilities, knowing that neither he nor his simple burghers could meet the Rand magnates on equal terms, much less send all those imposing missions to European capitals, imploring Continental aid, sympathy or intervention, unless they beckoned to their side men used to the ways of the world and to the ways of diplomacy. It is, of course, impossible to absolve President Kruger in the first degree from the chief blame in this matter; since it was he who tempted Dr. Leyds and his following to put about that tissue of falsehoods, both in the Transvaal and in Europe, in support of the Boer cause, which has done the Uitlanders so much injury. Nevertheless, Mr. Kruger has in any case managed to deceive himself that he has a patriotic motive in what he has done, though it is difficult to understand how he can reconcile with patriotism the amassing of a huge fortune, and the enriching of his numerous relatives, much less the open corruption and venality going on all around him, at which he winks and connives; as difficult as it is to imagine how a man who has gone so directly against all Christian doctrine, and has supported with all his strength the illicit liquor trade whereby the natives are debauched, can embroider his every act with a scriptural quotation. Assuredly the President's religion is not that of the New Testament. Dr. Leyds, on the other hand, has not the excuse of ignorance and prejudice for what he has done. He has exploited the Transvaal and deceived its people.

The day of reckoning for the President is coming, when his burghers will ask him why he deceived them into the belief that Great Britain had no soldiers, and that such as she had were cowards and imbeciles; but however hardly the wrath of the awakened Boer may fall on leaders of his own race, his wrath with the Hollander clique, who have wrongly informed and advised those leaders, is certain to be ten times more terrible.

I am aware that in my endeavour to give in a few words an impression of the gross misgovernment of the Transvaal, I have omitted many of the most serious counts in the indictment against the Government of that country. Nothing could condemn that Government more completely than the disgraceful way in which the Chief Justice, Mr. Kotze, was thrown to the dogs because he would not become the creature of the Raad, or, in other words, of the President. The outcome of this struggle between the Executive and Judiciary, the subservience of the latter to the former, has, of course, destroyed the alien's last hope of obtaining justice; since the Raad, and not the High Court, is now declared to be the first judicial authority in the land.* The right of public meeting does not exist in the Transvaal. Of the adult male population of Johannesburg, only one in a hundred enjoys the franchise. The officials are uniformly corrupt. There is scant protection for life or property; outrages of all kinds go unavenged; and the sale of liquor to the natives, in defiance of a law which it was never intended should be carried

* Written before June 1, 1900.

out, results in 25 per cent. of the Kaffir labourers on the Rand being in a constant state of intoxication.

But the abuses and oppressions from which not only the mining industry, but the whole population of the Rand suffer, are limitless. Sir Alfred Milner's proposal at the Bloemfontein Conference, had it been accepted, would have prepared the way for the gradual removal of these abuses. Still the process would have been a long and tedious one; since until the Uitlander population spread itself all over the country, it could not hope to have a majority, and could only hope to carry forward a progressive policy by means of moral suasion; the gradual leavening of the mass of ignorance, that is to say. I freely confess that, having regard to the past history of the President, I thought, until the last almost, that he would ultimately accept the High Commissioner's exceedingly moderate terms. That he did not do so shows to what a low ebb British prestige must have fallen in the Dutchman's eyes; and how terribly misled he has been as to our strength and resources, and as to our willingness to put them both forth to the utmost. That we did not put forth our power earlier, may be ascribed to political considerations and to an unhappy fact, which Lord Salisbury has been too proud to admit, but which Mr. Chamberlain has tacitly acknowledged. Under our system of government, when the power to make or mar imperial policy rests with the people, the most patriotic administration is afraid, as the present administration was afraid, to risk its

chances of carrying through a thoroughly national and imperial programme, lest it should give occasion to the little Englanders to stump the country with the cry that its opponents were attempting to crush liberty, or, in this particular case, to coerce a free and independent nation. Seeing that the great majority of the electors vote according to their sentiments, and not according to their reason (that necessarily being an unknown quantity with them), a government which wants to save the country from the ruinous disasters into which the nominees of ignorance have constantly betrayed it, is compelled to order its footsteps warily, lest indeed it should be tripped up before it can accomplish the good work that lies before it.

However that may be, we have now put our hands to the plough, and we shall not turn back until the presumptuous pretensions of these small communities of semi-civilised farmers are silenced for ever. On the whole, it is fortunate that the vaulting ambition of the President of the Orange Free State, President Steyn, has involved the lesser Republic in the fate of the greater. It will make the business of settling the matter simpler and cleaner.

There may be some innocent folk who really believe, as many anything but simple folk pretend to believe, that the war is a millionaire's war or a land-grabber's war. The idea is comically erroneous. That the Government has done its utmost to avoid the war, the Blue Books conclusively prove. It has been too anxious almost, to adhere strictly to those

unfortunate instruments for which previous governments were responsible.

As to the millionaires, there are millionaires and millionaires. Several are patriots, while others are entitled to our respect as the organisers and conductors of giant industries. But whatever we may think of the millionaire, I would say of him, generally, what the Oxford undergraduate said of his father, "After all, one must remember that he is a human being." As touching the African millionaire, however, the playful little way he has of letting securities "go flop," in which he has persuaded one to invest one's little all, may sometimes make one doubt whether he is entitled to the considerations claimed by the undergraduate for his father. In any case, human being or not, he is not often a person one is likely to become enthusiastic about or to go out of one's way to defend. Many of the South African millionaires came from the pavement or thereabouts, and when one has met them, it is sometimes difficult to discover sufficient reason why they should not have remained there. I do not pretend to believe that the Rand magnates, as a body, are now, or were at any time, animated by lofty or patriotic motives in what they have done to relieve the mining industry from the intolerable disabilities under which it suffers. We could scarcely expect them to be very zealous for British suzerain rights, since, as a matter of fact, a great number of them are German and not British subjects. For the rest, so long as there was any reasonable hope that

these disabilities were removable by local endeavour, they stood aloof from the efforts of the rank and file to secure needful economic and political reforms. That they will benefit largely by the action of the British Empire in taking up the cause of the Uitlanders must be obvious to the meanest intelligence; since they are always able to buy securities in the cheapest market, and when the war is over they will be able to sell them in the dearest. But these are quite minor considerations. If any one is so simple as to believe that the British Government has undertaken the arduous task of bringing the Pretoria oligarchy to justice merely to oblige a number of comparatively unimportant persons, the Rand millionaires, he is cherishing a grotesque and ridiculous delusion. In point of fact, important as it was to relieve Johannesburg from the oppression of Pretoria, even that object sinks into insignificance in comparison with the real object of the war, which is nothing more nor less than to teach the Boers, once and for all, who is master in South Africa; and to set at rest for ever the question of British paramountcy throughout that country. And it was, be it remembered, the Boers themselves who raised this issue. The whole course of Pretoria's policy since the conclusion of the convention of 1881, has been guided by the effort to wriggle out of the conditions of vassalage which in a lucid moment our rulers insisted on including in that instrument. They tried to do this in 1884, but failed; they have been trying ever since. Meanwhile, by

employing the enormous surplus funds at their disposal, they have taken every means to fan and foster the feeling of disloyalty, the aspirations towards a United Africander Republic, in Cape Colony and Natal. The Africander Bond, which simple folk and interested folk have asked us to regard as a loyal organisation of Cape Dutchmen, aims as a matter of fact at the subversion of British influence in South Africa; and, to use the words of its constitution, the establishment of "a United South Africa under its own flag." Of course in such an organisation there is room for degrees of disloyalty; and I do not contend that all its members are prepared or anxious to throw off their allegiance to Great Britain; while I know that all of them are exceedingly keen on retaining the British navy as the protector of their coasts and their commerce. But the Cape Dutch are a remarkably "slim" people: they believe in sitting on the fence, and many of them have shown that when they thought they could do so with safety they were ready to take sides with the Transvaal, and support the conspiracy of the rulers of that country to establish a United South African Republic. Transvaal gold has, of course, done much to stimulate nationalist aspirations; while private ambitions and jealousies, and race antipathies have done more. From the very first the most dangerous members of the Transvaal government—always excepting the President and his Hollander bodyguard—were British subjects, such renegade Cape Dutchmen as Mr. Reitz and Mr. Smuts. There

are many who think that the Prime Minister of Cape Colony might as well join those Cape Dutchmen who have crossed the Rubicon. Mr. Schreiner is not a Dutchman; but a Cape Colonist of mixed German and British origin. Chance, however, has made him the leader of the Africander Bond, and assuredly he has done little enough during the last few months to show that his heart is with the imperial cause. He is understood to defend his conduct on the plea that he feels his presence in power, a man of avowed Africander Bond sympathies, is a guarantee against civil war. It has been said that if the Cape Premier were an open and avowed ally of Great Britain; if he had encouraged the loyalists of the Cape to form themselves into volunteer corps for service at the front; if he had prevented arms reaching the Transvaal and Orange Free State by way of British ports, and so forth, he would have incited the Cape Dutch to take sides with their brothers and cousins in the Republic. Now, accepting this theory as true, it will be seen at once what kind of situation we are really facing in South Africa. We are facing a rebellion on the part of the two Republics, a rebellion secretly approved and supported by the greater number of the Queen's subjects in Cape Colony, and no small number in Natal, too—for while the Dutch greatly outnumber the British in the parent Colony, they are in considerable force in the northern part of Natal. It comes to this, then, that what we are now about in South Africa, is the suppression of a rebel-

lion, active in the Republics, and covert in our own colonies. There can be no kind of doubt, however, that, when the Dutch of British South Africa have become convinced, for the time being in any case, that Great Britain has finally determined to retain her hold on the whole of South Africa (a conviction greatly weakened by the whole course of our South African policy in recent years), they will breathe a sigh of relief that they can no longer be expected to risk their skins and their lands in the attempt to set up an Africander Republic. If, however, when the Republics are finally subdued, there should be any weakness in the terms of settlement, the continual loyalty of the Cape Dutch will be as uncertain to calculate upon as the continued submission of the Transvaal and Free State Dutch may be certainly calculated against. If any one supposes that any real and lasting settlement of the South African question is possible on any other lines than the complete and unreserved assumption of imperial authority over the Transvaal, he is grievously mistaken. From my knowledge of this problem and all the factors which go to make it, I am absolutely certain that any settlement which fell short of this, could be a settlement in name only. The very first opportunity which presented itself, should we be involved in a conflict with France over the coming Morocco question, or with Russia over the ripening Chinese question, the old trouble will re-assert itself, and we shall have to undertake anew, perhaps under more unfavourable circumstances still, the business

of showing who is master in South Africa. The Transvaal must be disarmed; and it must for a time be garrisoned, and although it is premature to discuss whether it will be converted temporarily into a Crown Colony, or whether the Queen in Council will promulgate a new constitution for the Cape, Transvaal, Free State, Natal and Rhodesia uniting them in a Federal Commonwealth similar to the Dominion of Canada, or whether the boundaries of Natal should be extended, it may be asserted that in any case the Boer oligarchy must be swept away. After what has occurred, Sir Alfred Milner's minimum proposals are of course ridiculously inadequate; for as Mr. Chamberlain has said, an entirely new situation has been created by the Boer ultimatum. The Boers will find that the Conventions of 1881 and 1884 are mortal in a sense which they never attached to Lord Salisbury's description of them under that name. They will find that not only morally, but legally and actually, they themselves have dealt a death-blow to these conventions. It was the Boers who issued the ultimatum: it was they who threw off, in the case of the Transvaal, the suzerainty, in the case of the Free State, the paramountcy, of Great Britain. It was only under these conventions that the Transvaal enjoyed or could claim independence. By renouncing the suzerainty, the President has caused the country to revert to its status before 1881; he has revoked, or to be more precise, cancelled, that instrument; while the Free State in entering into an offensive and defensive

alliance with its northern neighbour, has put itself in the same position as the Transvaal. We are dealing manifestly with rebels and conspirators who must pay the penalty of treason.

At last we are to have the chance of retrieving the mistakes of 1836 downwards, and of relieving Englishmen, once and for all, from that intolerable condition of subserviency in which for nearly 20 years they have found themselves in the Dutch Republics. I am confident that my countrymen will turn a deaf ear to these stale commonplaces of ill-informed sentimentalists, who as I write are filling the air with their sighs and their cries because, as they put it, a free people are about to be robbed of their independence. Independence! What people enjoy a greater measure of independence than the subjects of the Queen, whether at home or in Her Majesty's colonies. We are condemned to listen to whines and whimperings at the cruelty of subjugating a small, God-fearing and liberty-loving people. As for God-fearing, it is unhappily a fact that despite their bravery and fighting qualities, which it would ill-become me to belittle, it would be difficult to find anywhere a more idle, dirty, ignorant or immoral race than the Transvaal Boers. They are past masters in the art of lying and deception. They have become debased through years of isolation and years of idleness; for all the real work is done by the Kaffirs. As to liberty, liberty for the Boers means the right to claim absolute licence for themselves; while they deny

the most elementary freedom or justice to the men who toil to feed and clothe them—the Kaffirs and the Uitlanders. As to robbing them of their country, there would be little enough of hardship about that were the phrase, a mere exuberance of rhetoric, in any way descriptive of the act of substituting good government for bad. For it must be remembered that it is only sixty years or so since the Boers took this country from the natives. Their right to it is merely the right of conquest; while our right to it when it falls to our arms, will rest on conquest plus our moral and inalienable rights as the Paramount Power in South Africa. I would say then that by every dictate of justice and of common sense we are bound to make an end of the Boer Republics, and with them the attempted Africander leadership in South Africa. The law of self-preservation obliges us to this course; for if you once leave the Boer a chance, he will renew his effort to make his race and his language dominant in the sub-continent. It is much kinder to him to let him see that the attempt is hopeless. There was a time when I looked to the intermarriage of Dutch and English to remove the antagonism between the two races. But that hope may be dismissed; at all events until such time as Great Britain has made considerable headway with the task of opening up and colonising the Transvaal. When the English are in great numerical superiority, the process of fusion may begin. But among the many reasons why I despair of any settlement being permanent

which will leave political power in the hands of the Transvaal or Free State Dutch, is the knowledge that even should the men be brought to acquiesce in British ascendancy, the women never will. It is the Boer women who have hardened the hearts of their husbands, fathers and brothers, and it is they who have done more than the male Boers to bring about the war. If I am asked why this is so, I can only say that the best explanation which presents itself to my mind is summed up in that famous saying of Virgil, which, being freely rendered, declares that a woman never forgives the man who is blind to her charms. Now it so happens that though our countrymen have not always been blind to the charms of the native woman, and the more the pity, few, if any, have as yet seen fit to cast eyes of admiration on the Dutch women of the Transvaal.

In conclusion I must say again, and say it with all seriousness, that we must tolerate no silly sentimentality which will stand in the way of a complete and final settlement of this century-old quarrel. As a writer in the *Quarterly Review* has recently said, quoting an old French proverb: "If two men ride on a horse, one of the men must ride behind." The Dutchmen must ride behind in South Africa. And I would ask for what are we making these enormous sacrifices, for what is much of the best blood of this country being spilt, if the Dutchman is not to ride behind? We have not asked the pick of our countrymen to lay down their lives merely

to secure a few ineffectual votes for the Uitlanders, but we have asked them to give those lives, and without question they die in that assurance, that England may be acknowledged the undisputed Lord of South Africa, and that she may have a free hand to create from Cape Town to Cairo a mighty Empire wherein millions of our race can find scope for their activities and opportunities for expansion: we have asked them to die, and they are dying for nothing less than this. And I say in all seriousness that if England should be untrue to this silent, this sacred, pledge, if she should allow the golden opportunity the patience of her rulers has at last given her, to consolidate the British Empire, by making secure that portion of it which is most open to attack, then England will be haunted in her downward course by the spirits of those brave and noble sons of Britain who fought and died for her in the days when she was still the mightiest Empire of free-born men the world had ever seen.

And here I must leave South Africa. I have dealt largely with the question of immediate moment because it is the question which has been ripening for solution throughout the century, and because its final settlement, in the interests of Great Britain, will mean that South Africa will enter upon an era of progress beyond the dreams of the most sanguine, while any failure to secure a settlement on the lines indicated above, would inevitably mean the beginning of the break-up of the British Empire.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SHADOW ATHWART PROGRESS.

As set forth in figures, the historyof the British Empire during the century presents an unassailable case for progress. There is scarcely a department of human affairs, so far as Great Britain and her colonies are concerned, which belies this statement; indeed it is probable that in the realm of the ascertainable and the definite, it would be difficult to find the exception which proves the rule; unless indeed the fact that two of our colonies, British Guiana and the West Indian group, are suffering, temporarily as I believe, from depression may be taken as exceptions. Still, so far in any case, as material progress goes, it is, for the Empire generally, a great and unanswerable fact. The increase in wealth has been astounding, both so far as private wealth and the wealth of the nation go. The returns of successive finance ministers, the death dues claimed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer prove this to demonstration. Political freedom, in fact freedom in a broader sense, has made remarkable strides. The people are infinitely better housed, fed and taught than they were at the beginning of the century. In 1801 the science of sanitation scarcely existed. The people fell hopeless victims to epidemics; while their lives were

at all times at the mercy of doctors, mostly ignorant and frequently neglectful. Their minds were as ill-cared for as their bodies; the few agencies concerning themselves with their intellectual welfare then existing, were totally inadequate for the purpose. Books were scarce and dear; the privilege of the rich and well-to-do. Newspapers and magazines scarcely existed, save for the fortunate few. Communication between mind and mind was difficult, for the post was expensive, clumsy and untrustworthy; and steam locomotion and telegraphy were unheard of. Travelling was obviously confined to the upper classes; the labouring, and indeed the greater part of the middle classes also, were debarred from moving about the country unless they were content to walk. If communication between town and town within the boundaries of the Kingdom was thus restricted, the possibilities of intercommunication between the various portions of the Empire were meagre enough. When an emigrant left his native land in the earlier part of the century, he left it for good, or in any case it is true to say this of the vast majority of emigrants.

I have endeavoured to trace under their several heads and subdivisions the various and multiform evidences of progress throughout the century and throughout the Empire. As I have said, the case for progress, bringing the record up to the end of the century, is, so far as material things go, overwhelming and complete. There are not wanting symptoms, dwelt upon lovingly by the pessimist,

that this material prosperity has reached its apogee, so far at all events as Great Britain is concerned. She is to be ousted from her position in the markets of the world by the United States and by Germany, by all and sundry in fact; her internal economy is to be dislocated, and her institutions subverted by a great upheaval of the industrial classes. It has scarcely come within the province of this work to discuss these contingencies, but it does come within its scope to speculate as to how far all this material progress can be regarded as actual progress. There are many thinkers, and not a few writers, who go so far as to deny the reality of material well-being as affecting the bulk of the people; they assert that wealth has fallen to the undeserving and the unscrupulous, and they protest loudly that modern civilization is a fraud; that its show and glitter are built upon the sufferings and sacrifices of the million, who toil in order that the elect of chance may enjoy ease and luxury. Terrible as the spectacle of the suffering poor is, hateful as this unfair division of the world's goods must be to all right-thinking men and women, it is, I think, impossible to deny that the evils of poverty and of the unequal distribution of the earth's fruits have lessened since the beginning of the century. The mass of the people have more freedom, more comforts, greater facilities for rest and enjoyment, than at any other time in the history of the English race. I am of course excluding the residuum; but into this matter I have gone as fully as I found possible in the foregoing pages.

The misgiving which weighs upon the mind in contending that the British race has progressed, is of a more radical and general nature even than that suggested by the terrible problem of the residuum. Though at the moment we have anarchy at both ends of the social scale; for there is little to choose between the cynical disregard of the moral law of the "smart" set, and the brutal violence of the Hooligan, it is true to say of the century as a whole that there has been a great improvement in manners, in sobriety, and in the observance of national laws. The people as a whole are more moral and less criminal. That they are any less religious because they are no longer compelled by law to attend their parish church, I do not maintain. But the fear obtrudes itself upon the mind that with all this amelioration of hard conditions, all this increase of prosperity, there has been no proportionate increase of happiness. Pleasure is everywhere, content nowhere. The unsettling of the old beliefs has, so far, brought no compensation in its train. Never has the world, and especially the Anglo-Saxon world, given itself over so unreservedly to the pursuit of material advantage; never has there been an age in which men hurried to get rich with so much singleness of aim. Therefore although there is less disposition to break the letter of the law, it is scarcely too much to say that the whole world is engaged in a conspiracy to evade its spirit. Again, while the votaries of coarse and brutal delights grow gradually less, the body of pleasure-seekers grows sen-

sibly greater. In brief the age—and especially is this the case with the progressive peoples, the British Empire at their head—is essentially an age which has said to itself, " Let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die."

The reason is not far to seek. While religious organisations grow apace, the comfort they formerly diffused steadily declines. This is undeniable fact—it must be apparent to every student of modern developments. Undoubtedly there has been religious progress. It is not for me to say there has been no spiritual progress, but if there has, it has been of so transitional and indefinite a character it is impossible to dogmatise about it. That the bulk of the people was always pagan, one recognises. Christianity put a thin veneer on paganism; and such as it was, the Reformation removed a good deal of that veneer, though that may seem a strong thing for a Protestant to say. The teaching of the French Encyclopædists and of their English equivalents, Tom Paine and his like, rendered the people actively, instead of merely negatively, atheistical. Frankly brutal and fatalistic, the lack of faith was scarcely felt by them. It is scarcely felt now, save when some revivalist movement, such as the Salvation Army inaugurated, touches the slumbering consciences and stirs the embers of ancient superstitions in the breasts of the masses. It may be questioned whether the essence of religion ever had a very firm hold on the upper classes; but until science had brought facts home to the intelligence of the think-

ing classes which appear unanswerably to destroy the bases of faith—the great bulk of the middle classes accepted religion in one shape or another as a real and living force. It is not for me to say whether the belief in individual immortality, which has undoubtedly perished, or almost perished, with the belief in a personal Deity, can be replaced by any other vitalising and forceful belief making for spirituality and happiness. But there can be no doubt that the conviction has sunk deep into the common mind of the Anglo-Saxon world; its literature breathes it, its actions attest it, that man is the veriest atom on a planet which is itself dust in the balance of the universe. That, at the very best, he is only a symptomatic expression of some hidden force; that he is nothing in himself, that his will is the resultant of forces pre-natal to himself, and external to himself, and that if he be a link in some chain, the chain is not of his forging, nor can it bind him to anything definite, anything permanent. Such consciousness as he has is but a phantasy, while even the phantasy is doomed to extinction at the death of the poor fools who have hitherto imagined it to be a real, absolute and imperishable entity. And the world which gave birth to this self-deceiving fraud is itself hastening to extinction, to absorption, that is to say, as dead matter in some fresh combination of blind forces, re-united to repeat in time the deceptive phantasmagoria in some other form. Hence what is human fame? what human achievement? What is honour? what vice?

what virtue? Ruskin has said, "When we build, let us think we build for ever." The mischief is we can no longer think it, because our eyes are fixed on the finite nature of all created things. My outlook on the world tells me this, if it tells me nothing else with surety, that the hurry to be rich, the apotheosis of material comfort, the hectic desire for pleasure, the enormous value attached to the mere act of living, that all these tendencies, and they are the tendencies of modern civilisation, as seen in the Anglo-Saxon world, are due to the fact that progressive man has lost his hold on everything outside this world. He may keep the semblance of faith, but the reality has gone. How could it be otherwise? The great truths of the evolution theory, grand and elevating if we could only feel that as we have come from humble beginnings we are destined for lofty ends, take a sombre hue when they are associated with the conclusions forced in upon us by experience and research that all things progress to a certain height and from that height decline. And man, peering into futurity, sees himself declining, and is forced back upon absorption in the present. But I must not follow this speculation further. It is the shadow athwart our prosperity and our progress. It is the day of altruism, it is true. The sufferings of the poor and the afflicted engage the thought and attention of thousands of charitable souls. That philanthropy proceeds too much from the head or from emotional sentimentality, rather than from the unprompted and un-

tainted heart must be allowed, but this is inevitable in an age which by constantly looking at the profit and loss account, has become hopelessly commercialised on the one hand, and by its excesses seriously enervated on the other.

So much it has behoved me to say of an aspect of the progress of this Empire which for many years now has forced itself upon my notice and attention and which I could not leave unsaid without being unfaithful to my brief. I have written admiringly of the wonderful, the almost complete and general advance of the Empire during the century: of the increase of wealth, knowledge and comfort in every direction. But I would not have it thought that my studentship of the times is so shallow as not to have taught me, convinced me that is to say, that in one regard, the most important of all, there has been no progress, that on the contrary there has been retrogression. In the important matter of happiness, we were never so poverty-stricken, never so bankrupt as we are to-day. The world, the progressive world, has lost its hold on the unseen. It aches for a new revelation, for a renewal of faith, though it proudly hides the truth from itself in its mad and headlong pursuit of the bubbles of the moment. For my part I believe this sad condition is the harbinger of a new birth, a spiritual renaissance, and that out of the crash and wreck of old beliefs and old shibboleths light is about to break forth.

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